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British Reformers

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at Princeton N. J.
by James Lenox Esqr.

TINDAL.

WRITINGS

OF

TINDAL,

FRITH, AND BARNES.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR

The Religious Tract Society,

AND SOLD AT THE DEPOSITORY, 56, PATERNOSTER-ROW;

ALSO BY J. NISBET, 21, BERNERS-STREET;

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OF THE REV.

WILLIAM TINDAL,

Translator of the Scriptures, and Martyr, A. D. 1536.

Vol. 2.

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PRINCETON
THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY

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SOME ACCOUNT

OF THE

LIFE OF WILLIAM TINDAL,

MARTYR, 1536.

William Tindal was born about the year 1500, on the borders of Wales, and was sent at an early age to Magdalen hall, in the University of Oxford. He was generally esteemed for his virtuous conduct and learning, and especially applied himself to the study of the scriptures. He also became acquainted with the writings of Luther and Erasmus, and privately instructed his fellow-students in scriptural truth. On account of his abilities, Tindal received an appointment in cardinal Wolsey's newly-founded college, but becoming suspected of Lutheranism, he was imprisoned, and being compelled to leave the university of Oxford, he removed to Cambridge.

When Tindal had finished his studies, he became tutor in the family of sir John Welch, of Little Sodbury, in Gloucestershire. Here he had access to many of the clergy, with whom he conferred on religious subjects, frequently engaging in disputations with those who were the most strenuous supporters of the papacy. The knight and his lady were much surprised at the boldness of their tutor, and returning one day from a banquet, to which they had been invited by some dignified ecclesiastics, they repeated some of the trite arguments advanced by the priests. Tindal, answering by the scriptures, maintained the truth, and reproved their false opinions. Then said lady Welch, "Well, there was such a doctor, who may spend a hundred pounds, and another two hundred pounds, and another three hundred pounds; and what, were it reason, think you, that we

should believe you before them?" To this personal argument, Tindal found it was unavailing to reply at that time, but shortly after he presented the knight and his lady with a translation he had made of a work written by Erasmus, called, The Manual of a Christian Soldier. They were impressed by its contents, and no longer gave the same entertainment and countenance to the ignorant and immoral Romish doctors. This the priests attributed to Tindal, and speedily began to manifest their hatred against him. Being summoned to appear before the chancellor of the diocese, he prayed earnestly to God to give him strength to stand fast in the truth of his word. He was protected; none of his accusers came forward, and he was dismissed with a reprimand.

There dwelt, not far off, a certain doctor, who had formerly been chancellor to a bishop, but who was an intimate friend of Tindal. The reformer went to him, and opened his mind upon several subjects relating to the scriptures: after conversing thereon, the ancient doctor said, "Do you not know that the pope is very antichrist, whom the scripture speaketh of? But beware what you say: for if you shall be perceived to hold that opinion, it will cost you your life;" adding, "I have been an officer of his, but I have given it up, and defy him and all his works." There is, indeed, good reason to believe that from the days of Wickliff, many individuals in England secretly held the truth.

Far different was the opinion of another divine, accounted a learned man, with whom Tindal reasoned not long after. Being hard pressed by the arguments of truth, he broke out into this blasphemous expression, "We had better be without God's laws than the pope's!"* Tindal, filled with godly indignation, replied, "I defy the pope, and all his laws;" adding, that if God spared his life, ere many years he would cause the boys that drove the plough to know more of the scripture than his opponent: a memorable declaration, which was accomplished, and blessed be God, we still see it fulfilled in our land.

The Romish priests now troubled Tindal still more, and he

* Erasmus, in his annotations on 1 Tim. i. mentions several of the blasphemous disputations often maintained in the schools; among them was, "Whether the pope be not more merciful than Christ was, since we do not read that Christ ever recalled any from the pains of purgatory."

found it became dangerous for him to remain in that part of the country. He therefore took leave of his friends, and went to London. From the preface to his translation of the five books of Moses, it appears that Tindal had then resolved to translate the new testament into English: but his views and proceedings are best stated in his own words. Speaking of the papists he says:—

"A thousand books had they rather to be put forth against their abominable doings and doctrine, than that the scripture should come to light. For as long as they may keep that down, they will so darken the right way with the mist of their sophistry, and so tangle them that either rebuke or despise their abominations, with arguments of philosophy, and with worldly similitudes and apparent reasons of natural wisdom; and with wresting the scripture unto their own purpose, clean contrary unto the process, order, and meaning of the text; and so delude them in descanting upon it with allegories; and amaze them, expounding it in many senses before the unlearned lay people, when it hath but one simple, literal sense, whose light the owls cannot abide, that though thou feelest in thine heart, and art sure, that all is false which they say, yet thou couldest not solve their subtle riddles.

"Which thing only moved me to translate the new testament. Because I had perceived by experience that it was impossible to establish the lay people in any truth, except the scriptures were plainly laid before their eyes in their mother tongue, that they might see the process, order, and meaning of the text: for else, whatsoever truth is taught them, these enemies of all truth quench it again, partly with the smoke of their bottomless pit, whereof thou readest in the Apocalypse, chap. ix.; that is, with apparent reasons of sophistry, and traditions of their own making, founded without ground of scripture, and partly in juggling with the text, expounding it in such a sense as is impossible to gather from the text, if thou see the process, order, and meaning thereof.

"And even in the bishop of London's house* I intended to have done it. For I was so turmoiled in the country where I was, that I could no longer dwell there.

* Tonstal, afterwards bishop of Durham, the most moderate of the Romish prelates. See the life of Bernard Gilpin. Christian Biography.

"The bishop of London came to my remembrance, whom Erasmus (whose tongue maketh, of little gnats, great elephants, and lifts up above the stars whosoever gives him a little exhibition) praises exceedingly, among others, in his Annotations on the new testament, for his great learning. Then, thought I, If I might come to this man's service, I were happy. And so I gat me to London, and, through the acquaintance of my master, came to sir Harry Guildford, the king's grace's comptroller, and brought him an oration of Isocrates, which I had translated out of Greek into English, and desired him to speak unto my lord of London for me; which he also did as he showed me, and willed me to write an epistle to my lord, and to go to him myself, which I also did, and delivered my epistle to a servant of his own, one William Hebilthwayte, a man of mine old acquaintance. But God, who knows what is within hypocrites, saw that I was beguiled, and that this counsel was not the next way unto my purpose, and therefore he gave me no favour in my lord's sight.

"Whereupon my lord answered me, his house was full, he had more than he could well find, and advised me to seek in London, where he said I could not lack a service. And so in London I abode almost a year, and marked the course of the world, and heard our praters, I would say our preachers, how they boasted themselves and their high authority; and beheld the pomp of our prelates, and how busy they were, as they yet are, to set peace and unity in the world, though it be not possible for them that walk in darkness to continue long in peace, for they cannot but either stumble or dash themselves at one thing or another that shall clean unquiet all together; and I saw things whereof I defer to speak at this time; and understood at the last not only that there was no room in my lord of London's palace to translate the new testament, but also that there was no place to do it in all England, as experience now openly declares."

During his abode in London, Tindal, thus rejected by one who professed to be a chief shepherd of Christ's flock, was protected and supported in his undertaking by a citizen and draper, named Humphry Monmouth, who being afterwards imprisoned for having countenanced and assisted Tindal, gave this account of his inmate:—

"Four years and a half past, or more, (about 1523,) I heard sir

William Tindal,* otherwise called Hotchens, preach two or three sermons at St. Dunstan's in the west;" Monmouth then relates Tindal's disappointment from the bishop, and that he requested his assistance, and proceeds, " I took him into my house half a year, and there he lived like a good priest as methought. He studied most part of the day and the night at his book, and by his good will he would eat but sodden meat, nor drink but small single beer. I never saw him wear linen about him in the space he was with me.† I promised him ten pounds sterling to pray for my father and mother's souls, and all christian souls.‡ I paid it him when he went to Hamburgh. Afterwards, he had from some others ten pounds sterling more, which he left with me, and within a year after sent for it." In a subsequent passage of this petition, Monmouth bears further testimony in favour of Tindal, and also shows the mental bondage in which good men were then held by the Romish ecclesiastics. " When I heard my lord of London preach at Paul's cross that sir William Tindal had translated the new testament into English, and that it was naughtily translated, that was the first time that ever I suspected or knew any evil of him. And shortly after, all the letters and treatises that he sent me, with divers copies of books which my servant did write, and the sermons that the priest did make at St. Dunstan's, I burned them in my house. He that wrote them out saw it. I burned them for fear of the translator, more than for any evil I knew of them." Monmouth was released, though not till he had suffered much loss and inconvenience; and he continued to favour and support the followers of the truth.§ He was afterwards alderman and sheriff, and died in 1537.

Tindal proceeded to Saxony, where he saw Luther and other reformers, and then settling at Antwerp, in which city several English merchants favourable to the truth resided, he proceeded with his translation, assisted by Frith and Roye. In 1526, an edition of fifteen hundred copies of the new testament was printed; many of them were sent into England and widely circulated.

* In those days the title " sir" was usually given to priests.

† Linen was an expensive luxury in those days. Sodden meat, means food merely boiled, or plain fare.

‡ From Tindal's writings it will be seen that he did not long retain this ancient error.

§ For a pleasing anecdote of this excellent man, see Latimer's Sermons, p. 208—210.

The wrath of the Romish prelates at this proceeding was very great; a mandate was immediately issued by Tonstal, bishop of London, commanding that all the testaments translated by Tindal should be brought to the vicar-general. Several books written by Tindal, Luther, and other reformers, were also forbidden. Of them Fox truly observes, "These books of W. Tindal, being compiled, published, and sent over into England, it cannot be spoken what a door of light they opened to the eyes of the whole English nation, which before were many years shut up in darkness."

We have noticed bishop Tonstal being anxious to suppress Tindal's testament; to forward his design, he adopted the following singular expedient. He consulted one Packington, a mercer and merchant of London, who traded to Antwerp, how he might get all these testaments into his hands, and burn them. We may believe that bishop Tonstal wished to prevent their dispersion, without resorting to those cruel measures, which he, differing from most of the Romish prelates, abhorred to put in practice.

Packington is said to have been a secret friend of Tindal's, and knew his want of money, and that a great many copies of this testament were still on hand: this appeared a fair opportunity to assist the reformer; he therefore told the bishop, that if his lordship pleased, he would endeavour to purchase all that remained unsold. To this the bishop consented; Tindal had the money, Packington many thanks, and the bishop the books, which were sent to England, and burned in Cheapside, to the great surprise and grief of the people in general.

The bishop now thought that all was safe, but soon discovered that he was mistaken; for the printers in Holland, finding the books were eagerly sought after, immediately printed another edition, and by the next year, they came over in greater numbers than before. His lordship, finding this to be the case, sent for Packington, and blamed him for not buying up all the testaments according to his promise. Packington assured the bishop that he had bought all that remained unsold, adding, that "he believed they had printed more since, and that he really did not see how this could be stopped, unless his lordship would also buy the types and presses!" The bishop, however, only smiled at this proposal, and so the matter ended.

These last editions were printed by the booksellers of Holland as a matter of profit.

Sir Thomas More, then lord chancellor, was very bitter against all the reformers, and their writings, particularly against the translation of the new testament; and from the records of those times, it appears that he was very strict in examining all heretics supposed to be in any manner connected with Antwerp. Amongst others, George Constantine, who had been beyond sea, was brought before him; and the chancellor, after many questions, told him that he would be favourable to him, if he would but truly say from whom Tindal and his companions had received the money on which they lived. "My lord," said Constantine, "I will tell you truly; it is the bishop of London that hath assisted us; for he bestowed among us a great deal of money for the new testaments which he burnt, and that has been, and still is, our only support." "Now, by my troth," said the chancellor, "I think this is the truth, for I told the bishop it would be so before he went about it!"

The public burning of the word of God excited much attention; most people concluded that there must be something in that book very different from the doctrines of the clergy, who were so eager to destroy it; and all the arguments of sir Thomas More, and others, who wrote against the translation, could not remove these suspicions, which were confirmed by the perusal of the testaments. The demand for them increased, although the bishop preached at St. Paul's Cross, declaring that there were two thousand texts wrong translated, and though all who imported these testaments, or purchased them, were prosecuted with severity. Among others, one John Raimund, a Dutchman, was punished for "causing fifteen hundred to be printed at Antwerp, and bringing five hundred of them into England." John Tindal, the brother of the translator, also was punished for "sending five marks to his brother, and receiving letters from him;" and condemned, with Thomas Patmore, another merchant of London, to do penance, by riding to the standard in Cheapside, with their faces to their horses' tails, having the testaments hung thickly round them, fastened to their gowns; they were then compelled to cast the books into a fire kindled on purpose to consume them.

It appears that several persons in London sold these

testaments; the price of them wholesale, in large quantities, was about thirteen pence each; but singly, by retail, from twenty-eight to thirty pence or even more; reckoning the difference of the value of money, we may consider these sums as equal to ten times the amount in our days. Notwithstanding all these exertions of the prelates, three large editions were sold before 1530. We may here remark, that although this translation was in some respects faulty, as always must be the case with a first edition, yet the number of errors before mentioned is an absurd exaggeration, even including mere typographical faults, such as broken letters, and words spelt amiss; and Dr. Geddes has observed, that "although it is far from a perfect translation, yet few first translations will be found preferable to it. It is astonishing how little obsolete the language of it is, even at this day; and in point of perspicuity and noble simplicity, propriety of idiom, and purity of style, no English version has yet surpassed it."

The following extract from the confession of John Tyball, of Bumsted in Essex, made before bishop Tonstal on April 28th, 1528, contains some interesting information relative to the circulation of Tindal's testament:—

"Furthermore he saith, that at Michaelmas last past was twelve months, this respondent and Thomas Hills came to London to friar Barons, then being at the Friars Augustines in London, to buy a new testament in English, as he saith. And they found the said friar Barons in his chamber, where there was a merchant man reading a book, and two or three more present. And when they came in, the friar demanded from whence they came, and they said from Bumsted; and they desired friar Barons, that they might be acquainted with him, because they had heard that he was a good man, and because they would have his counsel in the new testament, which they desired to have of him. And he saith, that the said friar Barons did perceive very well that Thomas Hills and this respondent were infected with opinions, because they would have the new testament. And then further they showed the said friar, that one sir Richard Fox, curate of Bumsted, by their means was well entered in their learning; and said that they thought to get him wholly in a short space; wherefore they desired the said friar Barons to make a letter to him, that he

would continue in that he had begun. Which friar did promise so to write to him a letter at afternoon, and to get them a new testament. And then, after that communication, they showed the friar Barons certain old books that they had, as the four evangelists and certain epistles of Peter and Paul in English.* Which books the said friar did little regard, and made a twyt of it,† and said, 'A point for them, for they are not to be regarded toward the new printed testament in English; for it is of more clean English.'‡ And then the said friar Barons delivered to them the said new testament in English, for which they paid three shillings and two-pence, and desired them that they would keep it close, for he would be loth it should be known. And after the delivering of the said new testament to them, the said friar Barons did liken the new testament in Latin to a cymbal tinkling and a brass sounding, but what further exposition he made upon it, he cannot tell. And then at afternoon they fetched the said letter from the said friar, which he wrote to sir Richard, and he read it openly before them. And so they departed from him; and never since spake with him, or wrote to him."

Robert Necton confessed that he had bought of Mr. Fish, dwelling by the Whitefriars in London, many of the new testaments in English of the great volume, at sundry times, to the number of twenty or thirty. He also bought of Geoffery Usher of St. Anthonies, eighteen new testaments of the small volume, and twenty-six other books. A Dutchman then in the Fleet prison, also would have sold him two or three hundred testaments, for which he was to have given ninepence each. These probably were the inferior edition, printed by the booksellers in Holland; the larger testaments of Tindal's first edition he sold for about three shillings and fourpence each. These confessions and others which Strype has printed in the appendix to his Memorials, from bishop Tonstal's own register, show that these books were widely circulated; also the extent to which the doctrines of the gospel were diffused among the lower classes, and the high price at which they purchased the word of God. These farmers and labourers willingly paid a sum of

* Probably of Wickliff's translation; in another part of his confession, Tyball says, he burnt them on hearing the curate was taken up.

† Made light of it.

‡ Better expressed, easier to be understood.

money for a new testament in English, which, when the difference in value of money is considered, is equal to two or three pounds at the present day.

Sir Thomas More published, in 1529, a Dialogue, in which he strongly advocated the doctrines of popery, and attacked the writings of the Reformers, especially the English testament; to which Tindal replied, ably defending his translation against the imputations cast upon it.* Meanwhile Tindal proceeded with his version of the old testament, and having completed the five books of Moses, he embarked for Hamburgh, designing to print that portion without delay. On the voyage he was shipwrecked, and lost all his books and papers, but being steadfastly resolved to proceed in his great work, he again proceeded to that city. Coverdale came to him, they resided there from

* In his preface to the five books of Moses, Tindal thus notices the cavils of his adversaries against his translation :—"When I had translated the new testament, I added an epistle unto the latter end, in which I desired them that were learned to amend if ought were found amiss. But our malicious and wily hypocrites, who are so stubborn, and hard hearted in their wicked abominations, that it is not possible for them to amend any thing at all, (as we see by daily experience, when both their lyings and doings are rebuked with the truth,) say, some of them, that it is impossible to translate the scripture into english; some, that it is not lawful for the lay people to have it in their mother tongue; some, that it would make them all heretics; as it would no doubt from many things which they of long time have falsely taught; and that is the whole cause wherefore they forbid it, though they pretend other cloaks. And some, or rather every one, say that it would make them rise against the king, whom they themselves (unto their damnation is it) never yet obeyed. And lest the temporal rulers should see their falsehood, if the scripture came to light, causes them so to lie.

"And as for my translation, in which they affirm unto the lay people, as I have heard say, to be I know not how many thousand heresies, so that it cannot be mended or corrected, they have yet taken such great pains to examine it, and to compare it unto what they would fain have it, and to their own imaginations and juggling terms, and to have somewhat to rail at; and, under that cloak, to blaspheme the truth, that they might with as little labour, as I suppose, have translated the most part of the bible. For they which in times past were wont to look on no more scripture than they found in their Duns, or such like devilish doctrine, have yet now so narrowly looked on my translation, that there is not so much as one *i* therein, if it lack a tittle over its head, but they have noted it, and number it unto the ignorant people for a heresy. Finally, in this they are all agreed,—to drive you from the knowledge of the scripture, and that you shall not have the text thereof in the mother tongue; and to keep the world still in darkness, to the intent they might sit in the consciences of the people, through vain superstition and false doctrine; to satisfy their filthy lusts, their proud ambition, and unsatiable covetousness; and to exalt their own honour above king and emperor, yea, and above God himself."

Easter till December, 1529, during which time they again translated the pentateuch; and it was printed in the following year, apparently at different presses.

Tindal then returned to Antwerp, where he continued his labours and printed a revised edition of his testament in 1534. During this period, the anger of the papists against him increased more and more; his books were prohibited by the king's proclamation but were anxiously sought after by the people. Many persons ventured their lives by bringing them into England; among them Richard Bayfield, who was burned in 1531. The Romish prelates and sir Thomas More were very particular in their inquiries respecting Tindal's proceedings, manner of life, &c., and at length the plans of his adversaries were matured. In 1534, they sent to Antwerp a Romanist, named Henry Philips, who, having an introduction to the merchants there, formed an acquaintance with Tindal. This popish emissary made himself so acceptable to his unsuspecting victim, that Tindal procured him a lodging in the house where he himself resided, and communicated his views and proceedings to his treacherous countryman. After some time, Philips proceeded to Brussels, and obtained authority from the officers of the emperor Charles V. to seize Tindal as a heretic. He then returned to Antwerp, and watching an opportunity when Poyntz, the person with whom Tindal lodged, was from home, he went to the house, and desired the hostess to provide dinner for himself and Tindal; from whom he borrowed some money. The latter declined this proposal, as he was engaged to dine elsewhere, but asked Philips to accompany him. The invitation being accepted, at the appointed time they went forth together, and having to pass through a long narrow entry into the street, Philips, with pretended courtesy, insisted upon his companion going first. When they came to the doorway, two officers were waiting, to whom Philips pointed out their prisoner. They seized Tindal, and carried him to the emperor's procurator, who caused search to be made for his writings, and sent him to the castle of Filford, (or Vilvorde,) where he remained until they put him to death.

Considerable interest was made for Tindal by the protestants in England, but without success; he was condemned as an offender against the imperial decree, passed in the Diet of

Augsburg, and after an imprisonment of a year and a half, during which interval the Romish doctors had many disputations with him, he was carried to the place of execution in 1536. Tindal was strangled, and his body afterwards burned, his last words were, " O Lord, open the king of England's eyes."

Such was the power of his doctrine, and the spirit of his life, that during the time of his imprisonment, it is said, he became the means of converting his keeper, his daughter, and others of the household. Also the rest who were in the castle reported of him, that if he were not a good christian man, they knew not whom to trust. Even the emperor's procurator left this testimony of him, that he was a learned, a good, and a godly man.

The writings of Tindal are numerous; in addition to the new testament and the pentateuch, he translated the other books of the old testament to the end of Nehemiah, which were printed as a part of the first complete English bible, published in 1535, by Coverdale. The psalms and the prophet Jonah were printed separately in his lifetime.* His other works, and the prologues prefixed to the books of scripture, were collected by Fox, and printed by Day in one volume, with the writings of Frith and Barnes. In addition to the pieces contained in the present work, Tindal wrote an answer to sir Thomas More's Dialogue—The Practice of Prelates, which contains a very severe exposure of the corruptions of popery—A Commentary upon the Epistles of St. John, which also enters fully into the errors of the church of Rome—and, A Treatise upon Signs and Sacraments. Some other small pieces have been ascribed to him.

Tindal also translated some writings of the German reformers, and published the Prayer and Complaint of the Ploughman; also, the Examinations of lord Cobham and William Thorp.

One of his principal works is, " The Obedience of a Christian Man, and how Christian Rulers ought to govern;" part of the

* As a translator of the scriptures, Tindal laboured with the most scrupulous accuracy; he says, " I call God to record against the day we shall appear before our Lord Jesus, to give a reckoning of our doings, that I never altered one syllable of God's word against my conscience, nor would do this day, if all that is in earth, whether it be honour, pleasure, or riches, might be given me." See his letter to Frith. The reader has already had other particulars respecting his version.

preface and the summary with which it concludes, are given in the present volume. Respecting this tract, an anecdote has been preserved too interesting to be omitted.

"Ann Boleyn, before she was queen, lent to Mrs. Gainsford, one of her female attendants, a tract written by Tindal, called, "The Obedience of a Christian Man." One day as she was reading it, a young gentleman named Zouch, also in the service of lady Ann, snatched the book away in sport, and refused to restore it. He was, however, induced to peruse the tract; and his heart was so affected by its contents, that 'he was never well but when he was reading that book.' Cardinal Wolsey had directed all the ecclesiastics about the court, to take especial care to prevent the writings of the reformers from being circulated there, lest they should come into the hands of the king; but this very caution proved the means of bringing to pass what he most feared! Dr. Sampson, the dean of the royal chapel, saw this book one day in the young man's hand, who was reading it in the chapel; most probably being weary of attendance upon the mass, the processions, and other mummeries. The dean called Zouch, and took the book from him, and gave it to the cardinal. Some days after, Lady Ann asked her attendant for the book, who, 'on her knees, told all the circumstances,' doubtless being fearful lest her mistress, as well as herself, should come into trouble from this carelessness. Lady Ann instantly went to the king, and 'upon her knees' entreated his help, that the book might be restored. Henry interfered, and at his command the book was given up to lady Ann, who brought it to him, requesting he would read it. The king did so, and was much pleased with the contents, saying, "This book is for me and all kings to read."

To the preceding account of Tindal, may be added the concluding paragraph of his life, prefixed by Fox to the collected edition of his works.

"And here to end and conclude this history with a few notes, touching his private behaviour in diet, study, and especially his charitable zeal, and tender relieving of the poor. First he was a man very frugal and spare of body, a great student and earnest labourer in setting forth the scriptures of God. He reserved or hallowed to himself two days in the week, which he named his days of pastime, and those days were Saturday and Monday.

On the Monday he visited all such poor men and women as had fled out of England to Antwerp by reason of persecution, and those who well understood good exercises and qualities, he very liberally comforted and relieved; and in like manner provided for sick and diseased persons. On the Saturday he walked round the town of Antwerp, seeking out every corner and hole where he suspected any poor person dwelt, and where he found any well occupied and yet overburdened with children, or else aged or weak, those also he plentifully relieved. And thus he spent his two days of pastime as he called them. And truly his alms were very large and great; and so they might well be, for his exhibition that he had yearly from the English merchants was considerable, and for the most part he bestowed it upon the poor as before is said. The rest of the days of the week he gave himself wholly to his books, wherein he laboured most diligently. When the Sunday came, then went he to some one merchant's chamber, or other, whither came many other merchants, and unto them would he read some part of scripture, either out of the old testament or out of the new, which proceeded so fruitfully, sweetly, and gently from him, much like to the writing of St. John the evangelist, that it was a heavenly comfort and joy to the audience to hear him read the scriptures; and likewise after dinner he spent an hour in the same manner. He was a man without any spot, or blemish of rancour, or malice, full of mercy and compassion, so that no man living was able to reprove him of any kind of sin or crime, although his righteousness and justification depended not thereupon before God, but only upon the blood of Christ, and his faith upon the same; in the which faith he died with constancy at Filford, and now resteth with the glorious company of Christ's martyrs blessedly in the Lord, who be blessed in all his saints. Amen.

"And thus much of the life and story of the true servant and martyr of God, William Tindal, who for his notable pains and travail, may well be called the apostle of England in this our latter age."

PRINCETON
THE

THE PARABLE

OF THE

WICKED MAMMON.

Published in the year 1527, the 8th of May.

"*There was a certain rich man which had a steward, that was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods; and he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? Give account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer my steward. The steward said within himself, What shall I do, for my master will take away from me my stewardship? I cannot dig, and to beg I am ashamed. I wot what to do, that when I am put out of my stewardship, they may receive me into their houses. Then called he all his master's debtors, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my master? And he said, An hundred tuns of oil. And he said to him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty. Then said he to another, What owest thou? And he said, An hundred quarters of wheat. He said to him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore. And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely. For the children of this world are in their kind wiser than the children of light. And I say also unto you, Make you friends of the wicked mammon, that when ye shall have need, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.*"—Luke xvith chapter.

Forasmuch as with this, and divers such other texts, many have enforced to draw the people from the true faith, and from putting their trust in the truth of God's promises, and in the merits and deserving of his Christ our Lord; and have also brought it to pass,—for many false prophets shall arise and deceive many, and much wickedness must also be, saith Christ; (Matt. xxiv.) and Paul saith, (2 Tim. iii.) Evil men and deceivers shall prevail in evil, while they deceive, and are deceived themselves;—and have taught them to put their trust in their own merits; and brought them to believe that they shall be justified in the sight of God by the goodness of their own works, and have corrupted the pure word of God, to confirm their

Aristotle* withal. For though the philosophers, and worldly wise men, were enemies above all enemies to the gospel of God; and though the worldly wisdom cannot comprehend the wisdom of God, as thou mayest see 1 Cor. i. and ii; and though worldly righteousness cannot be obedient unto the righteousness of God, (Rom. x.) yet whatsoever they read in Aristotle, that must be first true. And to maintain that, they rend and tear the scriptures with their distinctions, and expound them violently, contrary to the meaning of the text, and to the circumstances that go before and after, and to a thousand clear and evident texts. Wherefore I have taken in hand to expound this gospel, and certain other places of the new testament; and, as far forth as God shall lend me grace, to bring the scripture unto the right sense, and to dig again the wells of Abraham, and to purge and cleanse them of the earth of worldly wisdom wherewith these Philistines have stopped them. Which grace, grant me, God, for the love that he hath unto his Son, Jesus our Lord, unto the glory of his name. Amen.

Faith only justifieth

That faith only, before all works and without all merits but Christ's only, justifies and sets us at peace with God, is proved by Paul in the first chapter to the Romans. I am not ashamed, saith he, of the gospel, that is to say, of the glad tidings and promises which God hath made, and sworn to us in Christ. For it, that is to say the gospel, is the power of God unto salvation to all that believe. And it follows in the aforesaid chapter, that the just or righteous must live by faith.

For in the faith which we have in Christ, and in God's promises, we find mercy, life, favour, and peace. In the law we find death, damnation, and wrath; moreover, the curse and vengeance of God upon us. And it (that is to say the law) is called by Paul (2 Cor. iii.) the ministration of death and damnation. In the law we are proved to be the enemies of God, and that we hate him. For how can we be at peace with God and love him, seeing we are conceived and born under the power of the devil, and are his possession and kingdom, his captives and bondmen, and led at his will, and he holdeth our hearts,

* The doctrines of the Romish scholastic divines, which were founded upon the writings of Aristotle.

so that it is impossible for us to consent to the will of God, much more is it impossible for a man to fulfil the law of his own strength and power, seeing that we are by birth and of nature, the heirs of eternal damnation. As saith Paul, (Eph. ii.) We are by nature the children of wrath, which the law doth utter only, and helps us not, yea, it requires impossible things of us. The law when it commands that thou shalt not lust, gives thee not power so to do, but condemns thee, because thou canst not so do.

If thou wilt therefore be at peace with God, and love him, thou must turn to the promises of God, and to the gospel, which is called of Paul in the place before rehearsed to the Corinthians—the ministration of righteousness, and of the Spirit. For faith brings pardon, and forgiveness freely purchased by Christ's blood, and brings also the Spirit; the Spirit looses the bonds of the devil, and sets us at liberty. For where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, saith Paul in the same place to the Corinthians; that is to say, there the heart is free, and has power to love the will of God, and there the heart mourns that it cannot love enough. Now is that consent of the heart unto the law of God eternal life, yea, though there be no power as yet in the members to fulfil it. Let every man therefore, according to Paul's counsel, in the sixth chapter to the Ephesians, arm himself with the armour of God; that is to understand, with God's promises. And above all things, saith he, take unto you the shield of faith, wherewith ye may be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, that ye may be able to resist in the evil day of temptation, and especially at the hour of death.

See therefore that thou have God's promises in thine heart, and that thou believe them without wavering; and when temptation arises, and the devil brings the law and thy deeds against thee, answer him with the promises; and turn to God, and confess thyself to him, and say, It is even so, or else how could he be merciful; but remember that he is the God of mercy and of truth, and cannot but fulfil his promises. Also remember, that his Son's blood is stronger than all the sins and wickedness of the whole world, and therewith quiet thyself, and thereunto commit thyself, and bless thyself in all temptation, especially at the hour of death, with that holy candle.* Or else perishest thou, though thou hast a thousand holy candles about thee, a hundred tuns of holy water, a ship full of pardons, a

* Faith in Christ.

cloth-sack full of friar's coats,* and all the ceremonies in the world, and all the good works, deservings, and merits of all the men in the world, be they, or were they, ever so holy. God's word alone lasteth for ever, and that which he hath sworn doth abide, when all other things perish. So long as thou findest any consent in thine heart unto the law of God, that it is righteous and good, and also displeasure that thou canst not fulfil it, despair not, neither doubt but that God's Spirit is in thee, and that thou art chosen for Christ's sake to the inheritance of eternal life.

And again (Rom. iii.), We suppose that a man is justified through faith, without the deeds of the law. And likewise (Rom. iv.) we say, That faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. Also (Rom. v.), Seeing that we are justified through faith, we are at peace with God. Also (Rom. x.), With the heart doth a man believe to be made righteous. Also (Gal. iii.), Received ye the Spirit by the deeds of the law, or by hearing of the faith? Doth he which ministereth the Spirit unto you, and worketh miracles among you, do it of the deeds of the law, or by hearing of faith? Even as Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness. Understand therefore, saith he, that the children of faith are the children of Abraham. For the scripture saw before that God would justify the heathen or gentiles by faith, and showed before glad tidings unto Abraham, In thy seed shall all nations be blessed. Wherefore they which are of faith are blessed, that is to say, made righteous with righteous Abraham. For as many as are of the deeds of the law, are under curse. For it is written, saith he, Cursed is every man that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to fulfil them.

Also (Gal. ii.), where he resisted Peter to the face, the apostle says, We which are Jews by nation, and not sinners of the Gentiles, know that a man is not justified by the deeds of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, and have therefore believed on Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the deeds of the law, for by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified. Also, in the same place, he saith, Touching that I now live, I live in the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me; I despise not the grace of God, for

* The Romanists held that the soul was benefited by applying these and other superstitious articles to the body at the hour of death.

if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain. And of such like examples are all the epistles of Paul full. Mark how Paul labours with himself to express the exceeding mysteries of faith, in the epistle to the Ephesians, and in the epistle to the Colossians. Of these and many such like texts, are we sure that the forgiveness of sins and justifying, are appropriate unto faith only, without the adding to of works.

Take also the similitude that Christ made (Matt. vii.), A good tree bringeth forth good fruit, and a bad tree bringeth forth bad fruit. There seest thou that the fruit makes not the tree good, but the tree the fruit; and that the tree must be good, or be made good, before it can bring forth good fruit. As Christ also saith, (Matt. xii.), Either make the tree good and his fruit good also, either make the tree bad and his fruit bad also. How can ye speak well while ye yourselves are evil? So likewise is this true, and nothing more true—that a man before all good works must first be good, and that it is impossible that works should make him good, if he were not good before he did good works. For this is Christ's principle, and, as we say, a general rule. How can ye speak well, while ye are evil? so likewise how can ye do good, while ye are evil?

This is therefore a plain, and a sure conclusion not to be doubted of, that there must be first in the heart of a man before he do any good works, a greater and a more precious thing than all the good works in the world, to reconcile him to God, to bring the love and favour of God to him, to make him love God again, to make him righteous and good in the sight of God, to do away his sin, to deliver him and loose him out of that captivity wherein he was conceived and born, in which he could neither love God, nor the will of God. Or else how can he work any good work that should please God, if there were not some supernatural goodness in him, given of God freely, whereof that good work must spring? even as a sick man must first be healed or made whole, ere he can do the deeds of a whole man; and as the blind man must first have sight given him, ere he can see; and he that hath his feet in fetters, gyves, or stocks, must first be loosed, ere he can go, walk, or run; and even as those whom thou readest of in the gospel, who were possessed of the devils, could not laud God till the devils were cast out.

That precious thing which must be in the heart, before a man can work any good work, is the word of God, which in the gospel preaches, proffers, and brings unto all that repent and believe, the favour of God in Christ. Whosoever hears the word and believes it, the same is thereby righteous, and thereby is given him the Spirit of God, which leads him unto all that is the will of God; and he is loosed from the captivity and bondage of the devil, and his heart is free to love God, and desires to do the will of God. Therefore it is called the word of life, the word of grace, the word of health, the word of redemption, the word of forgiveness, and the word of peace; he that hears it not, or believes it not, can by no means be made righteous before God. This Peter confirms in the fifteenth of the Acts, saying that God through faith purifies the hearts. For of what nature soever the word of God is, of the same nature must the hearts be which believe thereon, and cleave thereunto. Now is the word living, pure, righteous, and true, and even so it makes the hearts of them that believe thereon.

If it be said that Paul, when he saith in the third to the Romans, No flesh shall be, or can be justified by the deeds of the law, means it of the ceremonies or sacrifices, it is an untrue saying. For it follows immediately,—By the law cometh the knowledge of sin. Now the ceremonies do not utter sin, but the law of commandments. In the fourth chapter he saith, The law causes wrath, which cannot be understood of the ceremonies, for they were given to reconcile the people to God again after they had sinned. If, as they say, the ceremonies which were given to purge sin and to reconcile, justify not, neither bless but temporally only, much more the law of commandments justifieth not. For that which proves a man to be sick, heals him not, neither does the cause of wrath bring to favour, neither can that which condemneth save a man. When the mother commands her child only to rock the cradle, and it grudges, the commandment does but utter the poison that lay hid, and sets him to contend with his mother, and makes him believe she loves him not.

These commandments also, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not lust, desire, or wish after thy neighbour's wife, servant, maid, ox, or ass, or whatsoever pertaineth unto thy neighbour, give me not power

so to do, but they utter the poison that is in me, and condemn me because I cannot so do, and prove that God is wroth with me, seeing that his will and mine are so contrary. Therefore saith Paul (Gal. iii.), If there had been given such a law that could have given life, then no doubt righteousness had come by the law, but the scripture concludeth all under sin, that the promise might be given unto them that believe through the faith that is in Jesus Christ.

The promises, when they are believed, are they that justify, for they bring the Spirit which looseth the heart, gives a desire to do the law, and certifies us of the good will of God towards us. If we submit ourselves unto God and desire him to heal us, he will do it, and will in the mean time, because of the consent of the heart unto the law, count us for whole, and will no more hate us, but pity us, cherish us, be tender hearted to us, and love us as he does Christ himself. Christ is our Redeemer, Saviour, peace, atonement, and satisfaction, and has made amends or satisfaction toward God for all the sin which they that repent, consenting to the law and believing the promises, do, have done, or shall do. So that if through fragility we fall a thousand times, yet if we do repent again, we have always mercy laid up for us in store in Jesus Christ our Lord.

The definition of true Faith.

What shall we say then to those scriptures which lay so much stress upon good works? As we read (Matt. xxv.), I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat, &c. and such like. Which all sound as though we should be justified, and accepted unto the favour of God in Christ through good works. Thus I answer, Many there are, who when they hear or read of faith, at once consent thereunto, and have a certain imagination or opinion of faith, as when a man tells a story, or of a thing done in a strange land, that pertains not to them at all; which yet they believe, and tell again as a true thing. And this imagination or opinion they call faith. They think no further than that faith is a thing which stands in their own power to have, as do other natural works which men work; but they feel no manner of working of the Spirit; nor the terrible sentence of the law, the fearful judgments of God, and the horrible damnation and captivity under Satan. Therefore as soon as they have this opinion, or imagination in their hearts,

that says, Verily this doctrine seems true, I believe it is even so—then they think that the right faith is there. But afterwards when they feel in themselves, and also see in others, that there is no alteration, and that the works follow not, but that they are altogether even as before, and abide in their old state; then think they that faith is not sufficient, but that it must be some greater thing than faith that should justify a man.

So fall they away from faith again, and cry, saying, Faith only, justifies not a man, and makes him acceptable to God. If thou ask them, Wherefore? they answer, See how many there are that believe, and yet do no more than they did before. These are they which Jude in his epistle called dreamers, which deceive themselves with their own fantasies. For what else is their imagination which they call faith, than a dreaming of faith, and an opinion of their own imagination wrought without the grace of God? These must needs be worse at the latter end than at the beginning. These are the old vessels that rend when new wine is poured into them (Matt. ix.); that is, they hear God's word, but hold it not, and therefore wax worse than they were before. But the right faith springs not of man's fantasy, neither is it in any man's power to obtain it, but is altogether the pure gift of God poured into us freely, without any manner of doing of us, without deserving and merits, yea and without seeking for of us. And it is, as saith Paul in the second to the Ephesians, even God's gift and grace purchased through Christ. Therefore it is mighty in operation, full of virtue, and ever working, which also renews a man, and begets him afresh, alters him, changes him, and turns him altogether into a new nature and conversation, so that a man feels his heart altogether altered and changed, and far otherwise disposed than before, and has power to love that which before he could not but hate, and delights in that which before he abhorred, and hates that which before he could not but love. And it sets the soul at liberty, and makes her free to follow the will of God: and doth to the soul even as health unto the body. After that a man is pined and wasted away with a long soaking* disease, the legs cannot bear him, he cannot lift up his hands to help himself, his taste is corrupt, sugar is bitter in his mouth, his stomach abhorreth meat, longing after slibbersauce and swash,† at which a

* Exhausting. † Unwholesome trash.

healthy stomach is ready to cast his gorge. When health comes, it changes and alters him wholly, gives him strength in all his members, and desire to do of his own accord that which before he could not do, neither could suffer that any man should exhort him to do; and he now has desire for wholesome things, and his members are free and at liberty, and have power to do of their own accord all things, which belong to a whole man to do, which before they had no power to do, but were in captivity and bondage. So likewise in all things right faith does to the soul.

The Spirit of God accompanies faith, and brings with her light, wherewith a man beholds himself in the law of God, and sees his miserable bondage and captivity, and humbles himself, and abhors himself; she brings God's promises of all good things in Christ. God works with his word, and in his word. And as his word is preached, faith roots herself in the hearts of the elect, and as faith enters, and the word of God is believed, the power of God looses the heart from the captivity and bondage under sin, and knits and couples him to God, and to the will of God. Faith alters him, changes him wholly, fashions and forges him anew, gives him power to love, and to do that which before was impossible for him either to love or to do, and turns him unto a new nature, so that he loves that which he before hated, and hates that which he before loved; and is wholly altered, and changed, and contrary disposed; and is knit and coupled fast to God's will, and naturally brings forth good works, that is to say, that which God commands him to do, and not things of his own imagination. And that he does of his own accord, as a tree brings forth fruit of its own accord. And as thou needest not to bid a tree to bring forth fruit, so is there no law put unto him that believes, and is justified through faith, as Paul saith in the first epistle to Timothy, the first chapter. Neither is it needful, for the law of God is written and graved in his heart, and his pleasure is therein. And as without commandment, but even of his own nature, he eats, drinks, sees, hears, talks, and goes; even so of his own nature, without co-action or compulsion of the law, he brings forth good works. And as a healthy man, when he is athirst, tarries but for drink, and when he hungers abides but for meat, and then drinks and eats naturally; even so is the faithful ever athirst, and an hungred after the will of God, and tarries but for occasion. And

whensoever an occasion is given, he works naturally the will of God; for this blessing is given to all them that trust in Christ's blood, that they thirst and hunger to do God's will. He that hath not this faith, is but an unprofitable babbler of faith and works, and knows neither what he babbles, nor what he means, nor whereunto his words pertain. For he feels not the power of faith, nor the working of the Spirit in his heart, but interprets the scriptures, which speak of faith and works, after his own blind reason and foolish fantasies, and not of any feeling that he hath in his heart—as a man rehearses a tale of another man's mouth, and knows not whether it be so or not, as he says, nor has any experience of the thing itself. Now the scripture ascribes both faith and works, not to us, but to God only, to whom only they belong, and to whom they are appropriate, whose gift they are, and the proper work of his Spirit.

Is it not a froward and perverse blindness, to teach how a man can do nothing of his own self, and yet presumptuously take upon them the greatest and highest work of God, even to make faith in themselves, of their own power, and of their own false imagination and thoughts? Therefore, I say, we must despair of ourselves, and pray God as Christ's apostles did, to give us faith, and to increase our faith. When we have that, we need nothing more. For faith brings the Spirit with her, and he not only teacheth us all things, but works them also mightily in us, and carries us through adversity, persecution, death, and hell, unto heaven and everlasting life.

The difference between false Faith and true Faith.

Mark diligently, therefore, seeing we are come to answer. The scripture (because of such dreams and feigned faith's sake) uses such manner of speaking of works, not that a man should thereby be made good toward God, or justified; but to declare unto others, and to take of others the difference between false feigned faith, and right faith. For where right faith is, there she brings forth good works—if there follow not good works, it is, no doubt, but a dream and an opinion of feigned faith.

Wherefore look, as the fruit makes not the tree good, but declares and testifies outwardly that the tree is good, as Christ saith, Every tree is known by his fruit; even so shall ye know the right faith by her fruit.

Take for an example, Mary that anointed Christ's feet. (Luke vii.) When Simon, who had Christ in his house, condemned her, Christ defended her, and justified her, saying, Simon, I have a certain thing to say unto thee, and he said, Master, say on. There was a certain lender which had two debtors, the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. When they had nothing to pay, he forgave both. Which of them, tell me, will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose he to whom he forgave most. And he said to him, Thou hast truly judged. And he turned him to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, and thou gavest me no water to my feet; but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss, but she, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou hast not anointed. And she hath anointed my feet with costly and precious ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Many sins are forgiven her, for she loveth much. To whom less is forgiven, the same doth love less, &c. Hereby see we, that deeds and works are but outward signs of the inward grace of the bounteous and plenteous mercy of God, freely received without all merits of deeds, yea, and before all deeds. Christ teaches to know the inward faith and love, by the outward deeds. Deeds are the fruits of love, and love is the fruit of faith. Love, and also the deeds, are great or small, according to the proportion of faith. Where faith is mighty and strong, there love is fervent, and deeds plenteous, and done with exceeding meekness; where faith is weak, there love is cold, and the deeds few, and seldom bear flowers and blossoms in winter.

Simon believed, and had faith, yet but weakly, and according to the proportion of his faith loved coldly, and had deeds thereafter: he had Christ unto a simple and bare feast only, and received him not with any great humanity. But Mary had a strong faith, and therefore burning love, and notable deeds, done with exceeding profound and deep meekness. On the one side she saw herself clearly in the law, both in what danger she was in, and her cruel bondage under sin, her horrible damnation, and also the fearful sentence and judgment of God upon sinners. On the other side she heard the gospel of Christ preached, and in the promises she saw with eagles' eyes the exceeding

abundant mercy of God that passeth all utterance of speech, which is set forth in Christ for all meek sinners that acknowledge their sins; and she believed the word of God mightily, and glorified God for his mercy and truth. And being overcome and overwhelmed with the unspeakable, yea, and incomprehensible abundant riches of the kindness of God, she inflamed and burned in love; yea, was so swollen in love, that she could not abide, nor hold, but must break out; and was so filled with love that she regarded nothing, but even to utter the fervent and burning love of her heart only; she had no respect to herself, though she was so great and notable a sinner; neither to the curious hypocrisy of the Pharisees, who ever disdain weak sinners; neither the costliness of her ointment; but with all humbleness did run unto his feet; washed them with the tears of her eyes, and wiped them with the hairs of her head, and anointed them with her precious ointment; yea, and would no doubt have run into the ground under his feet, to have uttered her love toward him; yea would have descended down into hell, if it had been possible. Even as Paul, in the ninth chapter of his epistle to the Romans, was filled with love, and overwhelmed with the plenteousness of the infinite mercy of God, which he had received in Christ unsought for, and wished himself banished from Christ and condemned, to save the Jews, if it might have been so. For as a man feels God in himself, so is he to his neighbour.

Mark another thing also. We, for the most part, because of our grossness in all our knowledge, proceed from that which is last and hindmost, unto that which is first; beginning at the latter end, disputing and making our arguments backward. We begin at the effect, and work and proceed unto the natural cause. As for an example: we first see the moon dark, and then search the cause, and find that the putting of the earth between the sun and the moon is the natural cause of the darkness, and that the earth hinders the light. Then dispute we backward, saying, The moon is darkened, therefore is the earth directly between the sun and the moon. Now the darkness of the moon is not the natural cause that the earth is between the sun and the moon, but the effect thereof, and the declarative cause, declaring and leading us unto the knowledge, how that the earth is directly between the sun and the moon, and causes the darkness, stopping the light of

the sun from the moon. And contrariwise, the earth being directly between the sun and the moon is the natural cause of the darkness. Likewise a man has a son, therefore is he a father, and yet the son is not the cause of the father, but contrariwise. Notwithstanding, the son is the declarative cause, whereby we know that the other is a father. After the same manner here, Many sins are forgiven her, for she loveth much: thou mayest not understand by the word "for," that love is the natural cause of the forgiving of sins, but declares it only; and contrariwise, the forgiveness of sins is the natural cause of love.

The works declare love. And love declares that there is some benefit and kindness showed, or else there would be no love. Why does one work and another not? or one more than another? because that one loves and the other not, or that the one loves more than the other. Why loves one and another not, or one more than another? because that one feels the exceeding love of God in his heart and another not, or that one feels it more than another. Scripture speaks after the most gross manner.* Be diligent therefore that thou be not deceived with curiousness, for men of no small reputation have been deceived with their own sophistry.

Hereby now seest thou, that there is great difference between being righteous and good in a man's self, and declaring and uttering righteousness and goodness. Faith only makes a man safe, good, righteous, and the friend of God; yea, and the son and the heir of God, and of all his goodness, and possesses us with the Spirit of God. The work declares the faith and goodness. Now the scripture uses the common manner of speaking, and the very same that is among the people. As when a father saith to his child, Go, and be loving, merciful, and good to such or such a poor man, he bids him not therewith to be made merciful, kind, and good, but to testify and declare the goodness that is in him already, with the outward deed, that it may break out to the profit of others, and that others may feel it who have need thereof.

After the same manner shalt thou interpret the scriptures which make mention of works—that God thereby wills that we show forth that goodness which we have received by faith, and let it break forth and come to the profit of others.

* The manner which presents itself plainest to the senses.

that the false faith may be known and weeded out by the roots. For God gives no man his grace that he should let it lay still and do no good withal, but that he should increase it and multiply it with lending it to others; and with open declaring of it with the outward works, provoke and draw others to God. As Christ saith in Matthew the fifth, Let your light so shine in the sight of men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. Or else where it is a treasure digged in the ground, and hidden wisdom, what profit is therein?

Moreover, therewith the goodness, favour, and gifts of God which are in thee, not only shall be known unto others but also unto thine own self, and thou shalt be sure that thy faith is right, and that the true Spirit of God is in thee, and that thou art called and chosen of God unto eternal life, and loosed from the bonds of Satan, whose captive thou wast; as Peter exhorts in the first chapter of his second epistle, through good works to make our calling and election (wherewith we are called and chosen of God) sure. For how dare a man presume to think that his faith is right, and that God's favour is on him, and that God's Spirit is in him, when he feels not the working of the Spirit, neither is himself disposed to any godly thing? Thou canst never know or be sure of thy faith but by thy works; if works follow not, yea, and that of love, without looking after any reward, thou mayest be sure that thy faith is but a dream, and not right, and even the same that James called dead faith and not justifying.

Abraham, through works, (Gen. xxii.) was sure that his faith was right, and that the true fear of God was in him, when he had offered his son; as the scripture saith, Now know I that thou fearest God, (that is to say, Now is it open and manifest that thou fearest God,) inasmuch as thou hast not spared thy only son for my sake.

So now abide sure and fast by this; That a man inwardly in the heart and before God, is righteous and good through faith only, before all works. Notwithstanding, yet outwardly and openly before the people, yea, and before himself, he is righteous through the work, that is, he knows and is sure through the outward work, that he is a true believer, and in the favour of God, and righteous and good through the mercy of God—that thou mayest call the one an open and an outward righteousness, and the other, an

inward righteousness of the heart; so yet, that thou understand by the outward righteousness, no other thing save the fruit that follows, and a declaring of the inward justifying and righteousness of the heart, and not that it makes a man righteous before God, but that he must be first righteous before him in the heart; even as thou mayest call the fruit of the tree the outward goodness of the tree, which follows and utters the inward natural goodness of the tree.

This James means in his epistle, where he saith, Faith without works is dead, that is, If works follow not, it is a sure and an evident sign that there is no faith in the heart, but a dead imagination and dream, which they falsely call faith.

In the same manner is this saying of Christ to be understood, Make you friends of the unrighteous mammon, that is, show your faith openly, and what ye are within, in the heart, with outward giving and bestowing your goods on the poor, that ye may obtain friends; that is, that the poor on whom thou hast showed mercy may at the day of judgment, testify and witness of thy good works. That thy faith and what thou wast within in thy heart before God, may there appear by thy fruits, openly to all men. For unto the right believers shall all things be comfortable, and unto consolation, at that terrible day: and, contrariwise, unto the unbelievers, all things shall be unto desperation and confusion; and every man shall be judged openly and outwardly, in the presence of all men, according to his deeds and works. So that not without a cause thou mayest call them thy friends which testify at that day of thee, that thou livedst as a true and a right christian man, and followedst the steps of Christ in showing mercy, as no doubt he doth who feels God merciful in his heart. And by the works is the faith known, that it was right and perfect. For the outward works can never please God, nor make friends, except they spring of faith. Forasmuch as Christ himself (Matt. vi. and vii.) disallows and casts away the works of the pharisees, yea, prophesying and working of miracles, and casting out of devils, which we count and esteem for very excellent virtues; yet they make no friends with their works, while their hearts are false and impure, and their eyes double. Now without faith no heart is true or eye single, so that we are compelled to confess that works make not a man righteous or good, but that the heart

must first be righteous and good, before any good work proceed thence.

Consequently, All good works must be done freely, with a single eye, without respect of any thing, and that no profit be sought thereby.

This Christ commands, where he saith, (Matt. x.) Freely have ye received, freely give again. For, look, as Christ with all his works did not deserve heaven, for that was his already, but did us service therewith, and neither looked, nor sought his own profit, but our profit, and the honour of God the Father only; even so we, with all our works, may not seek our own profit, neither in this world nor in heaven, but must, and ought, freely to work to honour God withal, and without all manner of respect, seek our neighbour's profit, and do him service. That Paul means, (Phil. ii.) saying, Be minded as Christ was, who being in the shape of God, equal unto God, and even very God, laid that apart, that is to say, hid it, and took on him the form and fashion of a servant. That is, as concerning himself he had enough, that he was full and had all plenteousness of the Godhead, and in all his works sought our profit, and became our servant.

The cause is—Forasmuch as faith justifies and puts away sin in the sight of God, brings life, health, and the favour of God, makes us the heirs of God, pours the Spirit of God into our souls, and fills us with all godly fulness in Christ; it were too great a shame, rebuke, and wrong unto the faith, yea to Christ's blood, if a man would work any thing to purchase that wherewith faith hath endued him already, and God hath given him freely. Even as Christ had done rebuke and shame unto himself, if he would have done good works, and wrought to have been made thereby God's Son and heir over all, which he was already. Now faith makes us the sons or children of God. (John i.) He gave them might or power to be the sons of God, in that they believed on his name. If we be sons, so are we also heirs. (Rom. viii. and Gal. iv.) How can or ought we then to work to purchase that inheritance whereof we are heirs already by faith?

What shall we say then to those scriptures, which sound as though a man should do good works, and live well for heaven's sake or eternal reward? As these are, Make you friends of the unrighteous mammon. And (Matt. vi.)

Gather you treasures together in heaven. Also (Matt. xix.), If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments: and such like. This say I, that they who understand not, neither feel in their hearts what faith means, talk and think of the reward, even as they do of the work; neither suppose they that a man ought to work, but in a respect to the reward. For they imagine, that it is in the kingdom of Christ, as it is in the world among men, that they must deserve heaven with their good works. Howbeit their thoughts are but dreams and false imaginations. Of these men Malachi speaks (chap. i.), Who is it among you that shutteth a door for my pleasure for nought, that is, without respect of reward? These are servants that seek gains and vantage, hirelings and day labourers, who here on earth receive their rewards, as the pharisees with their prayers and fastings. (Matt. vi.)

But thus goes it with heaven, with everlasting life and eternal reward; likewise as good works naturally follow faith, as it is above stated, so that thou needest not command a true believer to work, or compel him with any law, for it is impossible that he should not work; he tarries but for an occasion; he is ever disposed of himself; thou needest but to put him in remembrance, and that to know the false faith from the true. Even so naturally does eternal life follow faith and good living, without seeking for, and it is impossible that it should not come, though no man thought thereon. Yet it is rehearsed in the scripture, alleged and promised, to know the difference between a false believer and a true believer, and that every man may know what follows good living naturally and of itself, without taking thought for it.

Take a general example:—Hell, that is, everlasting death, is threatened unto sinners, and yet it follows sin naturally without seeking for. For no man does evil to be condemned therefore, but had rather avoid it. Yet there the one follows the other naturally, and though no man told or warned him of it, yet the sinner would find it and feel it. Nevertheless, it is therefore threatened, that men may know what follows evil living. Now then, as after evil living his reward follows unsought for, even so after good living his reward follows naturally unsought for, or unthought upon. Even as when thou drinkest wine, be it good or bad, the taste follows of itself, though thou therefore drink it not. Yet the scripture testifies, and it is true,

that we are by inheritance heirs of damnation; and that before we are born, we are vessels of the wrath of God, and full of that poison whence all sins naturally spring; and wherewith we cannot but sin, which the deeds that follow (when we behold ourselves in the glass of the law of God) do declare and utter, kill our consciences, and show us what we were and knew not of it, and certifies us that we are heirs of damnation. For if we were of God we should cleave to God, and desire after the will of God. But now our deeds compared to the law, declare the contrary, and by our deeds we see ourselves, both what we are and what our end shall be.

So now thou seest that life eternal and all good things are promised unto faith and belief; so that he who believes on Christ shall be safe. Christ's blood has purchased life for us, and has made us the heirs of God; so that heaven comes by Christ's blood. If thou wouldest obtain heaven with the merits and deservings of thine own works, so didst thou wrong, yea, and shamedst the blood of Christ, and unto thee Christ were dead in vain. Now the true believer is heir of God by Christ's deservings, yea, and in Christ was predestinate and ordained unto eternal life before the world began. And when the gospel is preached unto us, we believe the mercy of God; and in believing we receive the Spirit of God, which is the earnest of eternal life; and we are in eternal life already, and feel already in our hearts the sweetness thereof, and are overcome with the kindness of God and Christ, and therefore love the will of God, and of love are ready to work freely, and not to obtain that which is given us freely, and whereof we are heirs already.

Now when Christ saith, Make you friends of unrighteous mammon—Gather you treasure together in heaven—and such like, thou seest that the meaning and intent is no other but that thou shouldest do good, and so will it follow of itself naturally, without seeking and taking of thought, that thou shalt find friends and treasure in heaven, and receive a reward. So let thine eye be single, and look unto good living only, and take no thought for the reward, but be content. Forasmuch as thou knowest and art sure that the reward and all things contained in God's promises follow good living naturally; and thy good works do but testify only, and certify thee that the Spirit of God is in thee, whom thou hast received in earnest of God's truth.

And that thou art heir of all the goodness of God, and that all good things are thine already, purchased by Christ's blood, and laid up in store against that day, when every man shall receive according to his deeds, that is, according as his deeds declare and testify, what he is or was. For they that look unto the reward, are slow, false, subtle, and crafty workers, and love the reward more than the work, yea, hate labour, yea, hate God, which commands the labour, and are weary both of the commandment, and also of the Commander, and work with tediousness. But he that works out of pure love, without seeking of reward, works truly.

Again, that not the saints, but God only receives us into eternal tabernacles, is so plain and evident, that it needs not to declare or prove it. How shall the saints receive us into heaven, when every man has need for himself that God only receive him to heaven, and every man scarcely hath for himself? As it appears by the five wise virgins, (Matt. xxv.) who would not give of their oil unto the unwise virgins. And Peter saith, in his first epistle, that the righteous is with difficulty saved. So seest thou the saying of Christ, Make you friends, and so forth, that they may receive you into everlasting tabernacles, pertains not unto the saints which are in heaven, but is spoken of the poor and needy which are here present with us on earth; as though he should say: What, buildest thou churches, foundest abbeys, chauntries, and colleges, in the honour of saints, to my mother, St. Peter, Paul, and saints that are dead, to make of them thy friends? They need it not, yea, they are not thy friends, but theirs which lived then when they did, of whom they were holpen. Thy friends are the poor, which are now in thy time, and live with thee; thy poor neighbours which need thy help and succour. Them make thy friends with thy unrighteous mammon, that they may testify of thy faith, and that thou mayest know and feel that thy faith is right and not feigned.

Further, such receiving into everlasting habitations is not to be understood as that men shall do it. For many, to whom we show mercy and do good, shall not come there; neither matters it, so that we meekly and lovingly do our duty, yea, it is a sign of strong faith and

fervent love, if we do well to the evil, and study to draw them to Christ in all that lies in us. But the poor give us an occasion to exercise our faith, and the deeds make us feel our faith, and certify us and make us sure that we are safe, and are escaped and translated from death unto life; and that we are delivered and redeemed from the captivity and bondage of Satan, and brought into the liberty of the sons of God, in that we feel desire and strength in our heart to work the will of God. And at that day shall our deeds appear and comfort our hearts, witness our faith and trust, which we now have in Christ, which faith shall then keep us from shame, as it is written, None that believeth in him shall be ashamed. (Rom. ix.) So that good works help our faith, and make us sure in our consciences, and make us feel the mercy of God. Notwithstanding, heaven, everlasting life, joy eternal, faith, the favour of God, the Spirit of God, desire and strength unto the will of God, are given us freely of the bounteous and plenteous riches of God, purchased by Christ, without our deservings, that no man should rejoice but in the Lord only.

Exposition of this Gospel.

For a further understanding of this gospel, here may be made three questions: What mammon is? Why it is called unrighteous? and, After what manner Christ bids us imitate and follow the unjust and wicked steward, who with his lord's damage provided for his own profit and vantage, which no doubt is unrighteousness and sin?

First, "Mammon" is a Hebrew word, and signifies riches or temporal goods, and especially all superfluity, and all that is above necessity, and that which is required unto our necessary uses, wherewith a man may help another without undoing or hurting himself; for "Hamon," in the Hebrew speech, signifies a multitude or abundance, or many, and there hence cometh "mahamon," or "mammon," abundance or plenteousness of good or riches.

Secondly, It is called "Unrighteous Mammon," not because it is got unrighteously, or with usury, for of unrighteously gotten goods no man can do good works, but ought to restore them home again. As it is said (Isa. lxi.), I am a God that hateth offering that cometh of robbery; and Solomon (Prov. iii.) saith, Honour the Lord of thine own goods. But it is called unrighteous, because it

is in unrighteous use. As Paul speaks unto the Ephesians how that the days are evil though God hath made them, and they are a good work of God's making. Howbeit they are yet called evil, because that evil men use them amiss; and much sin, occasions of evil, and peril of souls are wrought in them. Even so are riches called evil, because that evil men bestow them amiss and misuse them. For where riches are, there goes it after the common proverb, He that hath money hath what he listeth. And they cause fighting, stealing, laying wait, lying, flattering, and all unhappiness against a man's neighbour. For all men hold on riches' part.

But more especially before God, is it called unrighteous mammon, because it is not bestowed and ministered unto our neighbour's need. For if my neighbour need and I give him not, neither share liberally with him out of that which I have, then I withhold from him unrighteously that which is his own. Forasmuch as I am bounden to help him by the law of nature, which is, Whatsoever thou wouldest that another did to thee, that do thou also to him; and Christ says (Matt. v.), Give to every man that desireth thee; and John, in his first epistle, If a man have this world's good and see his brother need, how is the love of God in him? And this unrighteousness in our mammon very few men see, because it is spiritual, and in those goods which are gotten most truly and justly; which beguiles men, for they suppose they do no man wrong in keeping them, in that they got them not with stealing, robbing, oppression, and usury, neither hurt any man now with them.

Thirdly, Many have busied themselves in studying what, or who, this unrighteous steward is, because Christ so praised him. But shortly and plainly this is the answer. That Christ praises not the unrighteous steward, neither sets him forth for us to imitate because of his unrighteousness, but because of his wisdom only, in that he, though wrongfully, so wisely provided for himself. As if I would provoke another to pray or study, and say, The thieves watch all night to rob and steal, why canst thou not watch to pray and to study? here I praise not the thief and murderer for their evil doing, but for their wisdom, that they so wisely and diligently wait on their unrighteousness. Likewise when I say, bad women tire themselves with gold and silk to please their lovers: what wilt not thou garnish

thy soul with faith to please Christ? here praise I not whoredom, but the diligence which it misuses.

Paul also (Rom. v.) likens Adam and Christ together, saying that Adam was a figure of Christ. And yet of Adam have we but pure sin, and of Christ grace only, which are out of measure contrary. But the similitude or likeness is in the original birth, and not in the virtue and vice of the birth. So that as Adam is father of all sin, so is Christ father of all righteousness; and as all sinners spring of Adam, even so all righteous men and women spring of Christ. After the same manner, the unrighteous steward is here an example unto us, in his wisdom and diligence only, in that he provided so wisely for himself, that we, with righteousness, should be as diligent to provide for our souls, as he with unrighteousness provided for his body.

Other texts explained.

Likewise mayest thou explain all other texts which sound as though it were between us and God, as it is in the world; where the reward is more looked upon than the labour; yea, where men hate the labour, and work falsely with the body, and not with the heart, and no longer than they are looked upon, that the labour may appear outward only.

When Christ saith (Matt. v.), "Blessed are ye when they rail on you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil sayings against you, and yet lie, and that for my sake, rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven."—Thou mayest not imagine that our deeds deserve the joy and glory that shall be given unto us, for then Paul saith (Rom. xi.), Favour were not favour, I cannot receive it of favour and of the bounties of God freely, and by deserving of deeds also. But believe as the gospel glad tidings and promises of God say unto thee, that for Christ's blood sake only, through faith, God is at one with thee, and thou art received to mercy, and art become the son of God and heir annexed with Christ, of all the goodness of God, the earnest whereof is the Spirit of God poured into our hearts. Of which things the deeds are witnesses, and certify our consciences that our faith is unfeigned, and that the right Spirit of God is in us. For if I patiently suffer adversity and tribulation for conscience of God only, that is to say, because I know God and testify the truth, then am I sure

that God hath chosen me in Christ and for Christ's sake, and hath put in me his Spirit as an earnest of his promises, whose working I feel in mine heart, the deeds bearing witness unto the same. Now it is Christ's blood only that deserved all the promises of God; and that which I suffer and do, is partly the curing, healing, and mortifying of my members, and killing of that original poison wherewith I was conceived and born, that I might be altogether like Christ; and partly the doing of my duty to my neighbour, whose debtor I am for all that I have received of God; to draw him to Christ with all suffering, with all patience, and even with shedding my blood for him, not as an offering or merit for his sins, but as an example to provoke him. Christ's blood only puts away all the sin that ever was, is, or shall be, from them that are elect and repent, believing the gospel, that is to say, God's promises in Christ.

Again, in the same fifth chapter we read, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do well to them that hate you and persecute you, that ye may be sons of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun shine upon evil, and on good, and sendeth his rain upon just and unjust."—Not that our works make us the sons of God, but testify only, and certify our consciences, that we are the sons of God, and that God hath chosen us, and washed us in Christ's blood, and hath put his Spirit in us. And it follows, If ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? do not the publicans even the same? and if ye shall have favour to your friends only, what singular thing do ye? do not the publicans even the same? Ye shall be perfect therefore, as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. That is to say, If ye do nothing but what the world doth, and they which have the spirit of the world, whereby shall ye know that ye are the sons of God, and beloved of God more than the world? But, and if ye imitate, and follow God in well doing, then no doubt it is a sign that the Spirit of God is in you, and also the favour of God, which is not in the world, and that ye are inheritors of all the promises of God, and elect unto the fellowship of the blood of Christ.

Also (Matt. vi.), "Take heed to your alms, that ye do it not in the sight of men, to the intent that ye would be seen of them, or else have ye no reward with your Father which is in heaven. Neither cause a trumpet to be blown before thee when thou doest thine alms, as the hypocrites

do in the synagogues, and in the streets, to be glorified of the world. But when thou doest thine alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth ; that thy alms may be in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."—This puts us in remembrance of our duty, and shows what follows good works ; not that works deserve it, but that the reward is laid up for us in store, and that we are thereunto elect through Christ's blood, which the works testify. For, if we be worldly minded, and do our works as the world doth, how shall we know that God hath chosen us out of the world ? But, and if we work freely, without all manner of worldly respect, to show mercy, and to do our duty to our neighbour, and to be unto him as God is to us, then are we sure that the favour and mercy of God is upon us, and that we shall enjoy all the good promises of God through Christ, who hath made us heirs thereof.

Also, in the same chapter it follows, "When thou prayest, be not as the hypocrites, which love to stand and pray in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, for to be seen of men. But when thou prayest, enter into thy chamber, and shut thy door to, and pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. And likewise, when we fast (teaches Christ in the same place) we should behave ourselves that it appear not unto men how that we fast, but unto our Father which is in secret, and our Father which seeth in secret shall reward us openly."—These two texts do but declare what follows good works, for eternal life comes not by the deserving of works, but is (saith Paul, in the sixth to the Romans) the gift of God through Jesus Christ. Neither do our works justify us. For except we were justified by faith, which is our righteousness, and had the Spirit of God in us, to teach us, we could do no good work freely, without respect of some profit, either in this world, or in the world to come ; neither could we have spiritual joy in our hearts in time of affliction, and mortifying of the flesh.

Good works are called the fruits of the Spirit, (Gal. v.) for the Spirit worketh them in us, and sometimes fruits of righteousness, as in the second epistle to the Corinthians and ninth chapter. Before all works therefore, we must have a righteousness within in the heart, the mother of all works, and from whence they spring. The righteousness of the

scribes and pharisees, and of them that have the spirit of this world, is the glorious show and outward shining of works. But Christ saith to us (Matt. v.), Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. It is righteousness in the world if a man kill not. But a christian perceives righteousness if he love his enemy, even when he suffers persecution and torment of him, and the pains of death, and mourns more for his adversary's blindness than for his own pain, and prays God to open his eyes and to forgive him his sins, as did Stephen (Acts vii.) and Christ. (Luke xxiii.)

A christian considers himself in the law of God, and there puts off him all manner of righteousness. For the law suffers no merits, no deservings, no righteousness, neither any man, to be thereby justified in the sight of God. The law is spiritual and requires the heart and commandments to be fulfilled with such love and obedience as was in Christ. If any fulfil all that is the will of God, with such love and obedience, the same may be bold to sell pardons of his merits, and else not.

A christian, therefore, when he beholds himself in the law, puts off all manner of righteousness, deservings, and merits, and meekly and unfeignedly acknowledges his sin and misery, his captivity and bondage in the flesh, his trespass and guilt, and is thereby blessed with the poor in spirit. (Matt. chap. v.) Then he mourns in his heart, because he is in such bondage that he cannot do the will of God, and is a hungred and athirst after righteousness. For righteousness, I mean, which springs out of Christ's blood, for strength to do the will of God. And turns himself to the promises of God, and desires him for his great mercy and truth, and for the blood of his Son Christ, to fulfil his promises and to give him strength. And thus his Spirit ever prayeth within him. He fasts also not one day for a week, or a lent for a whole year, but professes in his heart a perpetual soberness, to tame the flesh, and to subdue the body to the Spirit, until he wax strong in the Spirit, and grow ripe into a full righteousness after the fulness of Christ. And because this fulness happens not till the body be slain by death, a christian is ever a sinner in the law, and therefore fasts and prays to God in the Spirit, the world seeing it not. Yet in the promises he is ever righteous through faith in Christ, and is sure that he

is heir of all God's promises, the Spirit which he hath received in earnest, bearing him witness, his heart also, and his deeds testifying the same.

Mark this then—To see inwardly that the law of God is so spiritual, that no flesh can fulfil it. And then to mourn, to sorrow, and to desire, yea to hunger and thirst after strength to do the will of God from the ground of the heart, and, notwithstanding all the subtilty of the devil, weakness and feebleness of the flesh, and wondering of the world, to cleave yet to the promises of God, and to believe that for Christ's blood sake thou art received to the inheritance of eternal life, is a wonderful thing, and a thing that the world knows not of; but whosoever feels that, though he fall a thousand times, he doth yet rise again a thousand times, and is sure that the mercy of God is upon him.

"If ye forgive other men their trespasses, your heavenly Father shall forgive you yours." (Matt. vi.) If I forgive, God shall forgive me, not for my deeds' sake, but for his promises' sake, for his mercy and truth, and for the blood of his Son, Christ our Lord. And my forgiving certifies my spirit that God shall forgive me, yea that he has forgiven me already. For if I consent to the will of God in my heart, though through infirmity and weakness I cannot do the will of God at all times; moreover though I cannot do the will of God so purely as the law requires of me, yet if I see my fault and meekly acknowledge my sin, weeping in mine heart, because I cannot do the will of God, and thirst after strength, I am sure that the Spirit of God is in me, and his favour upon me. For the world desires not to do the will of God, neither sorrows because he cannot, though he sorrow some time for fear of the pain that he believes shall follow. He that has the spirit of this world cannot forgive without amends making, or a greater vantage. If I forgive now how comes it? Verily because I feel the mercy of God in me. For as a man feels God to himself, so is he to his neighbour. I know by mine own experience, that all flesh is in bondage under sin, and cannot but sin, therefore am I merciful, and desire God to loose the bonds of sin even in mine enemy.

"Gather not treasure together in earth, &c. (Matt. vi.) but gather you treasure in heaven, &c."—Let not your hearts be glued to worldly things, study not to heap treasure upon treasure, and riches upon riches, but study to

bestow well that which is gotten already, and let your abundance succour the lack and need of the poor which have not. Have an eye to good works, to which if ye have desire and also power to do them, then are ye sure that the Spirit of God is in you, and ye in Christ, elect to the reward of eternal life which follows good works. But look that thine eye be single, and rob not Christ of his honour; ascribe not that to the deserving of thy works, which is given thee freely by the merits of his blood. In Christ we are sons; in Christ we are heirs; in Christ God chose us and elected us before the beginning of the world, created us anew by the word of the gospel, and put his Spirit in us that we should do good works. A christian man worketh, because it is the will of his Father only. If we do no good work, nor be merciful, how is our desire therein? If we have no desire to do good works, how is God's Spirit in us? If the Spirit of God be not in us, how are we his sons? How are we his heirs, and heirs annexed with Christ of the eternal life, which is promised to all them that believe in him? Now do our works testify and witness what we are, and what treasure is laid up for us in heaven, so that our eye be single, and look upon the commandment without respect of any thing, save because it is God's will, and that God desires it of us, and Christ has deserved that we do it.

"Not all they that say unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. vii.)—Though thou canst laud God with thy lips, and call Christ Lord, and canst babble and talk of the scripture, and knowest all the stories of the bible, yet shalt thou thereby never know thine election, or whether thy faith be right. But if thou feelest a desire in thine heart to the will of God, and bringest forth the fruits thereof, then hast thou confidence and hope; and thy deeds, and also the Spirit whence thy deeds spring, certify thine heart that thou shalt enter, yea, that thou art already entered into the kingdom of heaven. For it follows, He that heareth the word and doeth it buildeth his house upon a rock, and no tempest of temptations can overthrow it. For the Spirit of God is in his heart and comforteth him, and holdeth him fast to the rock of the merits of Christ's blood, in whom he is elect. Nothing is able to pluck him out of the hands of God, God is stronger than all things. And contrariwise, he that heareth the word,

and doeth it not, builds on the sand of his own imagination, and every tempest overthrows his building. The cause is, he hath not God's Spirit in him, and therefore understands it not aright, neither works aright. For no man knows the things of God (saith Paul, 1 Cor. ii.) save the Spirit of God, as no man knoweth what is in a man but a man's spirit which is in him. So then if the Spirit be not in a man, he works not the will of God, neither understands it, though he babble ever so much of the scriptures. Nevertheless, such a man may work after his own imagination, but God's will he cannot work ; he may offer sacrifice, but to do mercy he knows not. It is easy to say unto Christ, Lord, Lord, but thereby shalt thou never feel or be sure of the kingdom of heaven. But and if thou do the will of God, then art thou sure that Christ is thy Lord indeed, and that thou in him art also a lord, in that thou feelest thyself loosed and freed from the bondage of sin, and strong and of power to do the will of God.

Where the Spirit is, there is feeling ; for the Spirit makes us feel all things. Where the Spirit is not, there is no feeling, but a vain opinion or imagination. A physician serves but for sick men, and that for such sick men as feel their sicknesses, and mourn therefore and long for health. Christ likewise serves for sinners only who feel their sin, and that for such sinners as sorrow and mourn in their hearts for health. Health is power or strength to fulfil the law, or to keep the commandments. Now he that longs for that health, that is to say, to do the law of God, is blessed in Christ, and has a promise that his desire shall be fulfilled, and that he shall be made whole. (Matt. v.) Blessed are they which hunger and thirst for righteousness' sake, (that is, to fulfil the law,) for their desire shall be fulfilled. This longing and consent of the heart unto the law of God, is the working of the Spirit, which God hath poured into thine heart, in earnest that thou mightest be sure that God will fulfil all his promises that he hath made thee. It is also the seal and mark which God putteth on all men that he chose unto everlasting life. So long as thou seest thy sin and mournest and consentest to the law, and longest, though thou be ever so weak, yet the Spirit shall keep thee from desperation in all temptations, and certify thine heart, that God for his truth shall deliver thee and save thee ; yea, and by thy good deeds shalt thou be saved, not which thou hast done, but which Christ has done for

thee, For Christ is thine and all his deeds are thy deeds. Christ is in thee and thou in him, knit together inseparably. Neither canst thou be condemned except Christ be condemned with thee: neither can Christ be saved except thou be saved with him. Moreover, thy heart is good, right, holy, and just, for thy heart is no enemy to the law but a friend and a lover. The law and thy heart are agreed and at one, and therefore is God at one with thee. The consent of the heart unto the law, is unity and peace between God and man. For he is not mine enemy who would fain do me pleasure, and mourns because he hath not wherewith. Now he that opened thy disease unto thee and made thee long for health, shall, as he has promised, heal thee; and he that has loosed thy heart, shall, at his godly leisure, loose thy members. He that has not the Spirit has no feeling, neither desires, nor longs after power to fulfil the law; neither abhors the pleasures of sin; neither has any more certainty of the promises of God, than I have of a tale of Robin Hood, or of some act that a man tells me was done at Rome.* Another man may lightly make me doubt or believe the contrary, seeing I have no experience thereof myself; so is it of them that feel not the working of the Spirit, and therefore in time of temptation the buildings of their imaginations fall.

"He that receives a prophet in the name of a prophet, that is, because he is a prophet, shall receive the reward of a prophet; and he that gives one of these little ones a cup of cold water to drink in the name of a disciple, shall not lose his reward." (Matt. x.)—Note this, that a prophet signifies as well him that interprets the hard places of scripture, as him that prophesies things to come. Now he that receives a prophet, a just man, or a disciple, shall have the same or like reward, that is to say, shall have the same eternal life which is appointed for them in Christ's blood and merits. For except thou wert elect to the same eternal life, and hadst the same faith and trust in God, and the same Spirit, thou never couldest consent to their deeds and help them. But thy deeds testify what thou art, and certify thy conscience that thou art received to mercy, and sanctified in Christ's sufferings, and shalt hereafter, with all them that follow God, receive the reward of eternal life.

* Tindal here alludes to the work called Gesta Romanorum, which contained a variety of narratives, some of doubtful authority.

"Of thy words thou shalt be justified, and of thy words thou shalt be condemned." (Matt. xii.) That is, thy words as well as other deeds, shall testify with thee or against thee at the day of judgment. Many there are which abstain from the outward deeds of fornication and adultery, nevertheless rejoice to talk thereof and laugh; their words and laughter testify against them that their heart is impure, and they are adulterers and fornicators in the sight of God. The tongue and other signs oftimes utter the malice of the heart, though a man for many causes abstain his hand from the outward deed or act.

"If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." (Matt. xix.) First, remember that when God commands us to do anything, he doeth it not because that we of ourselves are able to do that which he commands; but that by the law we might see and know our horrible condemnation and captivity under sin, and therefore should repent and come to Christ, and receive mercy and the Spirit of God, to loose us, to strengthen us, and make us able to do God's will, which is the law. Now when he saith, If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments, it is as much as to say, he that keeps the commandments is entered into life: for except a man have first the Spirit of life in him by Christ's purchasing, it is impossible for him to keep the commandments, or that his heart should be loose or at liberty to desire after them, for of nature we are enemies to the law of God.

As touching what Christ said afterwards, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell thy substance, and give it to the poor"—he saith it not as that there were any greater perfection than to keep the law of God, (for that is all perfection,) but to show the other his blindness, who saw not that the law is spiritual, and requires the heart. But because he knew not that he had hurt any man with the outward deed, he supposed that he loved his neighbour as himself. But when he was bid to show the deeds of love, and give of his abundance to them that needed, he departed mourning. Which is an evident token that he loved not his neighbour as well as himself. For if he had need himself, it would not have grieved him to have received succour of another man. Moreover, he saw not that it was murder and theft, that a man should have abundance of riches lying by him, and not show mercy therewith, and kindly succour his neighbour's need. God

has given one man riches to help another at need. If thy neighbour need, and thou help him not, being able, thou withholdest his due from him, and art a thief before God.

That also, which Christ saith, how that it is harder for a rich man, who loveth his riches so that he cannot find in his heart liberally and freely to help the poor and needy, to enter into the kingdom of heaven, than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, declares that he was not entered into the kingdom of heaven, that is to say, eternal life. But he that keeps the commandments is entered into life, he has life and the Spirit of life in him.

"This kind of devils goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." (Matt. xvii.)—Not that the devil is cast out by the merits of fasting or praying. For he saith before, that for their unbelief's sake, they could not cast him out. It is faith, no doubt, that casts out the devils, and faith it is that fasts and prays. Faith has the promises of God whereunto she cleaves, and in all things thirsts for the honour of God. She fasts to subdue the body unto the spirit, that the prayer be not hindered, and that the spirit may quietly talk with God; she also, whenever opportunity is given, prays God to fulfil his promises unto his praise and glory. And God, who is merciful in promising, and true to fulfil them, casts out the devils, and doth all that faith desires, and satisfies her thirst.

"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world; for I was athirst, and ye gave me drink," &c. (Matt. xxv.)—Not that a man with works deserves eternal life, as a workman or labourer his hire or wages. Thou readest in the text, that the kingdom was prepared for us from the beginning of the world. And we are blessed and sanctified. In Christ's blood we are blessed from that bitter curse and damnable captivity under sin, wherein we were born and conceived. And Christ's Spirit is poured into us, to bring forth good works, and our works are the fruits of the Spirit, and the kingdom is the deserving of Christ's blood, and so is faith and the Spirit, and good works also. Notwithstanding, the kingdom follows good works, and good works testify that we are heirs thereof, and at the day of judgment shall they testify for the elect unto their comfort and glory: and to the confusion of the ungodly, unbelieving, and faithless sinners, who had not trust in the word of God's promises, nor desire to the will of God; but were

carried of the spirit of their father the devil, unto all abomination, to work wickedness with all lust, delectation, and greediness.

"Many sins are forgiven her, for she loveth much." (Luke vii.)—Not that love was cause of forgiveness of sins, but contrariwise the forgiveness of sins caused love, as it follows, to whom less was forgiven that same loveth less. And before, he commended the judgment of Simon, who answered that he loveth most to whom most was forgiven: and also said at the last, Thy faith hath saved thee (or made thee safe) go in peace. We cannot love except we see some benefit and kindness. As long as we look on the law of God only, where we see but sin and damnation and the wrath of God upon us, yea where we were damned afore we were born, we cannot love God. No, we cannot but hate him as a tyrant, unrighteous, unjust, and flee from him as did Cain. But when the gospel, that is those glad tidings and joyful promises, are preached, how that in Christ, God loves us first, forgives us, and has mercy on us, then we love again, and the deeds of our love declare our faith. This is the manner of speaking; as we say, Summer is nigh, for the trees blossom. Now the blossoming of the trees is not the cause that summer draws nigh; but the drawing nigh of summer is the cause of the blossoms, and the blossoms put us in remembrance that summer is at hand. So Christ here teaches Simon by the fervour of love in the outward deeds, to see a strong faith within, whence so great love springs. As the manner is to say, Do your charity, show your charity, do a deed of charity, show your mercy, do a deed of mercy; meaning thereby that our deeds declare how we love our neighbours, and how much we have compassion on them at their need. Moreover it is not possible to love except we see a cause. Except we see in our hearts the love and kindness of God toward us in Christ our Lord, it is not possible to love God aright.

We say also, "He that loves not my dog, loves not me." Not that a man should love my dog first, but if a man loved me, the love wherewith he loved me would compel him to love my dog, though the dog deserved it not, yea, though the dog had done him a displeasure, yet if he loved me, the same love would refrain him from revenging himself, and cause him to refer the vengeance unto me. Such speakings find we in scripture; John in the fourth of his

first epistle saith, He that saith I love God, and yet hateth his brother, is a liar; for how can he that loveth not his brother whom he seeth, love God whom he seeth not? This is not spoken that a man should first love his brother and then God, but as it follows; for this commandment have we of him, that he which loveth God should love his brother also. To love my neighbour is the commandment; and he that loveth not this commandment, loveth not God. The keeping of the commandment declares what love I have to God. If I loved God purely, nothing that my neighbour could do were able to make me either to hate him, or to take vengeance on him myself, seeing that God has commanded me to love him, and to remit all vengeance unto him. Mark now; how much I love the commandment, so much I love God; how much I love God, so much believe I that he is merciful, kind, and good, yea, and a Father unto me for Christ's sake. How much I believe that God is merciful unto me, and that he will for Christ's sake fulfil all his promises unto me; so much I see my sins, so much do my sins grieve me, so much do I repent and sorrow that I sin, so much that poison which moves me to sin displeases me, and so greatly desire I to be healed. So now by the natural order; first I see my sin; then I repent and sorrow; then I believe God's promises, that he is merciful unto me, and forgives me, and will heal me at the last; then I love, and then I prepare myself to the commandment.

"This do and thou shalt live." (Luke x.)—That is to say, Love thy Lord God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself. As who should say, If thou do this, or though thou canst not do it, yet if thou feelest desire thereunto, and thy spirit sighs, mourns, and longs after strength to do it, take a sign and evident token thereby, that the Spirit of life is in thee, and that thou art elect to life everlasting, by Christ's blood; whose gift and purchase is thy faith, and that Spirit which worketh the will of God in thee; whose gift also are thy deeds, or rather the deeds of the Spirit of Christ, and not thine, and whose gift is the reward of eternal life, which follows good works.

It follows also in the same place of Luke, "When he should depart he plucked out twopence and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take the charge or cure of

him, and whatsoever thou spendest more I will recompense it thee at my coming again." Remember, this is a parable, and a parable may not be expounded word for word; but the intent of the similitude must be sought out only in the whole parable. The intent of the similitude is to show to whom a man is a neighbour, or who is a man's neighbour, which is both one, and what it is to love a man's neighbour as himself.

The Samaritan helped him and showed mercy as long as he was present, and when he could be no longer present, he left his money behind him. And if that were not sufficient, he left his credence* to make good the rest, and forsook him not as long as the other had need. Then said Christ, Go thou and do likewise; that is, without difference or respect of persons; whosoever needs thy help, him count thy neighbour, and be thou his neighbour, and show mercy on him as long as he needs thy succour, and that is to love a man's neighbour as himself. Neighbour is a word of love, and signifies that a man should be ever nigh and at hand, and ready to help in time of need.

They that will interpret parables word by word, fall into straits oftimes, whence they cannot rid themselves; and preach lies instead of the truth. As do they who interpret by the twopence, the old testament and the new, and by that which is bestowed, works of supererogation. Howbeit superarrogance were a fitter term. That is to say, deeds which are more than the law requires, deeds of perfection and of liberality which a man is not bound to do but of his free will: and for them he shall have a higher place in heaven, and may give to others of his merits; or of which the pope after his death, may give pardons from the pains of purgatory.

Against which exposition I answer; first, a greater perfection than the law is there not. A greater perfection than to love God and his will, which is the commandments, with all thine heart, with all thy soul, with all thy strength, with all thy mind, is there none; and to love a man's neighbour as himself is like the same. It is a wonderful love wherewith a man loves himself. As glad as I would be to receive pardon of mine own life, if I had deserved death, so glad ought I to be to defend my neighbour's life without respect of my life, or of my goods. A man ought neither to spare his goods nor yet himself for

* Credit.

his brother's sake, after the example of Christ. (1 John iii.) Herein, saith he, perceive we love, in that he, that is to say Christ, gave his life for us, we ought therefore to bestow our lives for the brethren. Now, saith Christ, (John xv.) There is no greater love than that a man bestow his life for his friend.

Moreover, no man can fulfil the law; for John saith, (1 John i.) If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and truth is not in us; if we acknowledge our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to purge us from all iniquity. And in the Lord's prayer also we say, Father, forgive us our sins. Now if we be all sinners, none fulfils the law: for he that fulfilleth the law is no sinner. In the law, neither Peter nor Paul nor any other creature save Christ only, may rejoice. In the blood of Christ, which fulfilled the law for us, may every person that repents, believes, loves the law, and mourns for strength to fulfil it, rejoice, be he ever so weak a sinner. The twopence, therefore, and the credence that he left behind him to bestow more, if need were, signifies that he was everywhere merciful, both present and absent, without feigning, cloaking, complaining, or excusing, and forsook not his neighbour as long as he had need. Which example I pray that men may follow; and let works of supererogation alone.

"Mary hath chosen a good part which shall not be taken from her." (Luke x.)—She was first chosen of God and called by grace, both to know her sin and also to hear the word of faith, health,* and glad tidings of mercy in Christ; and faith was given her to believe, and the Spirit of God loosed her heart from the bondage of sin: then she consented to the will of God again, and above all things delighted to hear the word wherein she had obtained everlasting health, and this of his own mouth, which had purchased so great mercy for her. God chooses us first and loves us first, and opens our eyes to see his exceeding abundant love to us in Christ, and then we love again, and accept his will above all things, and serve him in that office whereunto he has chosen us.

"Sell that ye have, and give alms, and make you bags which wax not old, and treasure which faileth not in heaven." (Luke xii.)—This and such like, are not spoken that we should work as hirelings in respect of reward, and

* Salvation.

as though we should obtain heaven with merit; for he saith a little before, Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's pleasure to give you a kingdom. The kingdom comes then of the good will of almighty God through Christ, and such things are spoken, partly to put us in remembrance of our duty to be kind again. As is that saying, Let your light so shine before men that they, seeing your good works, may glorify your Father which is in heaven: as though one should say, If God has given you so great gifts, see ye be not unthankful, but bestow them unto his praise. Some things are spoken to move us to put our trust in God, as are these; Behold the lilies of the field: Behold the birds of the air: If your children ask you for bread will ye proffer them a stone? and many such like. Some are spoken to put us in remembrance to be sober; to watch and pray; and to prepare ourselves against temptations; and that we should understand and know, that temptations and occasion of evil come most when they are least looked for, lest we should be careless and sure of ourselves, negligent and unprepared. Some things are spoken that we should fear the wonderful and incomprehensible judgments of God lest we should presume. Some to comfort us that we despair not. And for like causes are all the examples of the old testament.

The Scriptures to be understood spiritually.

In conclusion, the scripture speaks many things as the world speaks, but they may not be worldly understood, but ghostly and spiritually, yea, the Spirit of God only understands them, and where he is not, there is not the understanding of the scripture, but unfruitful disputing and brawling about words.

The scripture saith, God seeth, God heareth, God smelleth, God walketh, God is with them, God is not with them, God is angry, God is pleased, God sendeth his Spirit, God taketh his Spirit away, and a thousand such like; and yet none of them is true after the worldly manner, and as the words sound. Read the second of Paul to the Corinthians: The natural man understands not the things of God, but the Spirit of God only. And we, saith he, have received the Spirit which is of God, to understand the things which are given us of God. For without the Spirit it is impossible to understand them. Read also the eighth to the Romans; They that are led with the Spirit of God,

are the sons of God. Now the son knoweth his Father's will, and the servant that hath not the Spirit of Christ, saith Paul, is none of his ; likewise he that hath not the Spirit of God is none of God's, for it is both one Spirit, as thou mayest see in the same place.

Now he that is of God, heareth the word of God. (John viii.) And who is of God but he that hath the Spirit of God ? Furthermore, saith he, Ye hear it not, because ye are not of God ; that is, ye have no desire for the word of God, for ye understand it not, and that because his Spirit is not in you.

Forasmuch then as the scripture is nothing else but that which the Spirit of God hath spoken by the prophets and apostles ; and cannot be understood but of the same Spirit ; let every man pray to God to send him his Spirit to loose him from his natural blindness and ignorance, and to give him understanding, and feeling of the things of God, and of the speaking of the Spirit of God. And mark this process :

First, We are damned of nature, so conceived and born ; as a serpent is a serpent, and a toad a toad, and a snake a snake, by nature. And as thou seest a young child has pleasure in many things wherein is present death, as in fire, water, and so forth, and so would slay himself with a thousand deaths if he were not waited upon and kept therefrom, even so we, if we should live these thousand years, could in all that time delight in no other thing, nor yet seek any other thing but that wherein is death of the soul.

Secondly, Of the whole multitude of the nature of man whom God has elected and chosen, and to whom he hath appointed mercy and grace in Christ, to them he sends his Spirit, which opens their eyes, shows them their misery, and brings them unto the knowledge of themselves ; so that they hate and abhor themselves, are astonished and amazed, and at their wit's end, neither know what to do, nor where to seek health.* Then, lest they should flee from God by desperation, he comforts them again with his sweet promises in Christ, and certifies their hearts that for Christ's sake they are received to mercy, and their sins forgiven, and they elected and made the sons of God, and heirs with Christ of eternal life ; and thus, through faith, are they set at peace with God.

* Salvation.

Now we may not ask why God chooses one and not another; neither think that God is unjust to condemn us before we do any actual deed; seeing that God hath power over all his creatures, of right to do with them what he lists, or to make of every one of them as he listeth. Our darkness cannot perceive his light. God will be feared, and not have his secret judgments known. Moreover, we by the light of faith see a thousand things which are impossible for an infidel to see; so likewise, no doubt, in the light of the clear vision of God, we shall see things which now God will not have known. For pride ever accompanies high knowledge, but grace accompanies meekness. Let us therefore give diligence rather to do the will of God, than to search his secrets, which are not profitable for us to know.

When we are thus reconciled to God; made the friends of God, and heirs of eternal life; the Spirit that God hath poured into us testifies, that we may not live after our old deeds of ignorance: for how is it possible that we should repent and abhor them, and yet have desire to live in them? We are sure therefore that God hath created and made us new in Christ, and put his Spirit in us, that we should live a new life, which is the life of good works.

What are good works.

That thou mayest know what are good works, and the intent of good works, or wherefore good works serve, mark this that follows.

The life of a christian man is inward between him and God, and properly is the consent of the spirit to the will of God, and to the honour of God. And God's honour is the final end of all good works.

Good works are all things that are done within the laws of God, in which God is honoured, and for which thanks are given to God.

The true use of Fasting.

Fasting is to abstain from surfeiting, or overmuch eating, from drunkenness, and care of the world, as thou mayest read Luke xxi.; and the end of fasting is to tame the body, that the Spirit may have a free course to God, and may quietly talk with God. For overmuch eating and drinking, and care of worldly business, press down the spirit, choke her and tangle her that she cannot lift up herself to God. Now he that fasts for any other intent

than to subdue the body, that the spirit may wait on God, and freely exercise herself in the things of God; the same is blind, and knows not what he doeth; he errs and shoots at a wrong mark, and his intent and imagination is abominable in the sight of God. When thou fastest from meat, and drinkest all day, is that a christian fast? or to eat at one meal that which were sufficient for four? A man at four times may bear that which he cannot at once. Some fast from meat and drink, and yet so entangle themselves in worldly business that they cannot once think on God. Some abstain from butter, some from eggs, some from all manner of white meat; some this day, some that day; some in the honour of this saint, some of that, and every man for a sundry purpose. Some for the tooth ache, some for the head ache, for fevers, pestilence, for sudden death, for hanging, drowning, and to be delivered from the pains of hell. Some are so mad, that they fast one of the Thursdays between the two St. Mary days, in the worship of that saint, whose day is hallowed between Christmas and Candlemas; and that to be delivered from the pestilence! All those men fast without conscience of God, and without knowledge of the true intent of fasting, and do no other than honour saints, as the Gentiles and heathen worshipped their idols, and are drowned in blindness, and know not of the testament that God hath made toward man in Christ's blood. In God they have neither hope nor confidence, neither believe his promises, neither know his will, but are yet in captivity under the prince of darkness.

Watching.

To WATCH, is not only to abstain from sleep, but also to be circumspect and to consider all perils; as a man should watch a tower or a castle. We must remember that the snares of the devil are infinite and innumerable, and that every moment new temptations arise, and that in all places fresh occasions meet us; against which we must prepare ourselves and turn to God, and complain to him, and make our moan, and desire him of his mercy to be our shield, our tower, our castle, and defence from all evil; to put his strength in us, for without him we can do nought; and above all things we must call to mind what promises God has made, and what he has sworn that he will do to us for Christ's sake; and with strong

faith cleave unto him, and desire him of his mercy and for the love that he has to Christ, and for his truth's sake, to fulfil his promises. If we thus cleave to God with strong faith and believe his words, then, as saith Paul, (1 Cor. x.) God is faithful that he will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, or above our might; that is to say, if we cleave to his promises and not to our own fantasies and imaginations, he will put might and power into us that shall be stronger than all the temptation which he shall suffer to be against us.

Prayer, what it is.

Prayer is a mourning, a longing, and a desire of the spirit toward God, for that which she needs, as a sick man mourns and sorrows in his heart, longing for health. Faith ever prayeth. For after that by faith we are reconciled to God, and have received mercy and forgiveness of God, the spirit longeth and thirsteth for strength to do the will of God, and that God may be honoured, his name hallowed, and his pleasure and will fulfilled. The spirit waiteth and watcheth on the will of God, and ever has her own fragility and weakness before her eyes; and when she sees temptation and peril draw nigh, she turns to God, and to the testament that God hath made to all that believe and trust in Christ's blood; and desires God for his mercy, and truth, and for the love he hath to Christ, that he will fulfil his promise; that he will succour, and help, and give us strength; and that he will sanctify his name in us, and fulfil his godly will in us; and that he will not look on our sin and iniquity, but on his mercy, on his truth, and on the love that he owes to his Son Christ; and for his sake to keep us from temptation, that we be not overcome; and that he deliver us from evil, and whatsoever moves us contrary to his godly will.

Moreover, of his own experience he feels other men's need, and no less commends to God the infirmities of others than his own, knowing that there is no strength, no help, no succour, but of God only. And as merciful as he feels God in his heart toward himself, so merciful is he to others; and as greatly as he feels his own misery, so great compassion has he on others. His neighbour is no less a care to him than himself; he feels his neighbour's grief no less than his own. And whensoever he sees oc-

casion, he cannot but pray for his neighbour as well as for himself; his nature is to seek the honour of God in all men, and to draw as much as in him is, all men unto God. This is the law of love, which springs out of Christ's blood into the hearts of all them that have their trust in him. No man needs to bid a christian man pray, if he see his neighbour's need; if he see it not, put him in remembrance only, and then he cannot but do his duty.

Now, as we desire one another to pray for us, that we do to put our neighbour in remembrance of his duty, and not that we trust in his holiness. Our trust is in God, in Christ, and in the truth of God's promises; we have also a promise, that when two or three, or more, agree together in any thing, according to the will of God, God heareth us. Notwithstanding, as God hears many, so he hears few, and so he hears one, if he pray after the will of God, and desire the honour of God. He that desires mercy, the same feels his own misery and sin, and mourns in his heart to be delivered, that he might honour God; and God for his truth must hear him, which saith by the mouth of Christ, (Matt. v.) Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. God, for his truth's sake, must put the righteousness of Christ in him, and wash his unrighteousness away in the blood of Christ. And be the sinner ever so weak, ever so feeble and frail, sin he ever so oft and so grievously; yet so long as this desire, and mourning to be delivered, remains in him, God sees not his sins and reckons them not, for his truth's sake, and love to Christ. He is not a sinner in the sight of God that would be no sinner. He that would be delivered has his heart loose already. His heart sins not, but mourns, repents, and consents unto the law and will of God, and justifies God; that is, bears record that God who made the law is righteous and just. And such a heart, trusting in Christ's blood, is accepted for fully righteous. And his weakness, infirmity, and frailty is pardoned, and his sins not looked upon; until God put more strength in him, and fulfil his desire.

When the weak in the faith, and unexpert in the mysteries of Christ, desire us to pray for them, then ought we to lead them to the truth and promises of God, and teach them to put their trust in the promises of God, in the love that God hath to Christ, and to us for his sake; and to strengthen their weak consciences; showing and proving

by the scripture, that as long as they follow the Spirit and resist sin, it is impossible they should fall so deep that God shall not pull them up again, if they hold fast by the anchor of faith, having trust and confidence in Christ. The love that God hath to Christ is infinite; and Christ did and suffered all things, not for himself, to obtain favour or aught else; for he had ever the full favour of God, and was ever Lord over all things; but to reconcile us to God, and to make us heirs with him, of his Father's kingdom. And God hath promised, that whosoever calleth on his name shall never be confounded or ashamed. (Rom. x.) If the righteous fall, saith the scripture, he shall not be bruised; the Lord shall put his hand under him. Who is righteous but he that trusts in Christ's blood, be he ever so weak? Christ is our righteousness; and in him ought we to teach all men to trust, and to expound unto all men the testament, which God has made to us sinners in Christ's blood. This ought we to do, and not make a prey of them, to lead them captive, to sit in their consciences, and to teach them to trust in our holiness, good deeds, and prayers, to the intent that we should feed our idle and slow bellies of their great labour and sweat, and so to make ourselves Christs and Saviours. For if I take on me to save others by my merits, make I not myself a Christ and a Saviour, and am indeed a false prophet, and a true antichrist, and exalt myself and sit in the temple of God; that is, the consciences of men?

Among christian men, love makes all things common; every man is other's debtor, and every man is bound to minister to his neighbour, and to supply his neighbour's lack of that wherewith God has endowed him. As thou seest in the world, how the lords and officers minister peace in the commonwealth, punish murderers, thieves, and evil doers; and to maintain their order and estate, the commons minister to them again rent, tribute, toll, and custom—so in the gospel, the curates which in every parish preach the gospel, ought of duty to receive an honest living for them and their households; and even so ought the other officers, which are necessarily required in the commonwealth of Christ. We need not use filthy lucre in the gospel, to chop and change, and to play the taverners, altering the word of God as they do their wines, to their most advantage, and to fashion God's word after every man's mouth; or to abuse the name of Christ, to obtain

thereby authority and power to feed our slow bellies.—Now seest thou what prayer is, the end thereof, and wherefore it serves.

If thou give me a thousand pounds to pray for thee, I am no more bound than I was before. Man's imagination can make the commandment of God neither greater nor smaller, neither can to the law of God either add or minish. God's commandment is as great as himself. I am bound to love the Turk with all my might and power; yea, and above my power, even from the ground of my heart, after the example that Christ loved me,—neither to spare goods, body, nor life, to win him to Christ. And what can I do more for thee if thou gavest me all the world? Where I see need, there can I not but pray, if God's Spirit be in me.

Alms, what it is.

Alms is a Greek word, and signifies mercy. One christian is debtor to another at his need, of all that he is able to do for him, until his need be sufficed. Every christian man ought to have Christ always before his eyes, as an example to imitate and follow, and to do to his neighbour as Christ has done to him; as Paul teaches in all his epistles, and Peter and John also. This order Paul uses in all his epistles: first, he preaches the law, and proves that the whole nature of man is condemned, in that the heart lusteth contrary to the will of God. For if we were of God, no doubt we should have desire for his will. Then he preaches Christ, the gospel, the promises, and the mercy that God has set forth to all men in Christ's blood; which they that believe, and take it for an earnest thing, turn themselves to God, begin to love God again, and prepare themselves to his will by the working of the Spirit of God in them. Last of all, he exhorts to unity, peace, and soberness; to avoid brawling, sects, opinions, disputing and arguing about words, and to walk in the plain and single faith and feeling of the Spirit, and to love one another after the example of Christ, even as Christ loved us; and to be thankful, and to walk worthy of the gospel, and as it becomes Christ, and with the example of pure living to draw all to Christ.

Christ is Lord over all; and every christian is heir with Christ, and therefore lord of all; and every one lord of whatsoever another has. If thy brother or neighbour

therefore need, and thou have to help him, and yet showest not mercy, but withdrawest thy hands from him, then robbest thou him of his own, and art a thief. A christian man has Christ's Spirit. Now is Christ merciful: if, therefore, thou be not merciful, after the example of Christ, then hast thou not his Spirit. If thou have not Christ's Spirit, then art thou none of his, (Rom. viii.) nor hast any part with him. Moreover, though thou show mercy unto thy neighbour, yet if thou do it not with such burning love as Christ did unto thee, so must thou acknowledge thy sin, and desire mercy in Christ. A christian man has nought to rejoice in, as concerning his deeds. His rejoicing is, that Christ died for him, and that he is washed in Christ's blood. Of his deeds he rejoices not, neither counts his merits, neither gives pardons of them, neither seeks a higher place in heaven by them, neither makes himself a saviour of other men through his good works—but he gives all honour to God, and in his greatest deeds of mercy, acknowledges himself a sinner unfeignedly, and is abundantly content with that place which is prepared for him of Christ; and his good deeds are to him a sign only that Christ's Spirit is in him, and he in Christ, and, through Christ, elect to eternal life.

The order of love or charity which some dream, the gospel of Christ knows not of, that a man should begin at himself, and serve himself first, and then descend, I know not by what steps. Love seeks not her own profit, (1 Cor. xiii.) but makes a man forget himself, and turn his profit to another man, as Christ sought not himself, or his own profit, but ours. This term, myself, is not in the gospel; neither yet father, mother, sister, brother, kinsman, that one should be preferred in love above another. But Christ is all, in all things. Every christian man to another is Christ himself; and thy neighbour's need hath as good right in thy goods as Christ himself, who is heir and Lord over all. And look, what thou owest to Christ, that thou owest to thy neighbour's need; to thy neighbour owest thou thine heart, thyself, and all that thou hast and canst do. The love that springs out of Christ excludes no man, neither puts difference between one and another. In Christ we are all of one degree, without respect of persons. Notwithstanding, though a christian man's heart be open o all men, and receives all men, yet, because his ability of goods extends not so far, this provision is made,—that

every man shall care for his own household, as father and mother, and thine elders that have holpen thee, wife, children, and servants. If thou shouldest not care and provide for thine household, then wert thou an infidel, seeing thou hast taken on thee so to do, and forasmuch as that is thy part committed to thee of the congregation. When thou hast done thy duty to thine household, and yet hast further abundance of the blessing of God, that owest thou to the poor that cannot labour, or would labour and can get no work, and are destitute of friends; to the poor, I mean, which thou knowest, to them of thine own parish. For that provision ought to be had in the congregation, that every parish care for their poor. If thy neighbours which thou knowest be served, and thou yet have superfluity, and hearest necessity to be among the brethren a thousand miles off, to them art thou debtor. Yea, to the very infidels we are debtors, if they need, so that we maintain them not against Christ, or to blaspheme Christ. Thus every man that needs thy help, is thy father, mother, sister and brother in Christ; even as every man that doeth the will of the Father, is father, mother, sister, and brother unto Christ.

Moreover, if any be an infidel and a false christian, and forsake his household, his wife, children, and such as cannot help themselves, then art thou bound to them if thou have wherewith, even as much as to thine own household. And they have as good right in thy goods as thou thyself; and if thou withdraw mercy from them, and hast wherewith to help them, then art thou a thief. If thou show mercy, so doest thou thy duty, and art a faithful minister in the household of Christ, and of Christ shalt thou have thy reward and thanks. If the whole world were thine, yet has every brother his right in thy goods, and is heir with thee, as we are all heirs with Christ. Moreover, the rich, and they that have wisdom, must see the poor set to work, that as many as are able may feed themselves with the labour of their own hands, according to the scripture and commandment of God.

Now seest thou what alms-deeds mean, and wherefore they serve. He that seeks with his alms more than to be merciful to a neighbour, to succour his brother's need, to do his duty to his brother, to give his brother that which he owes him, the same is blind and sees not what it is to be a christian man, and to have fellowship in Christ's blood.

Good works, what they are.

As pertaining to GOOD WORKS, understand that all works are good which are done within the law of God, in faith and with thanksgiving to God, and understand that thou in doing them pleasest God, whatsoever thou doest within the law of God, as in the most common deeds of life. And trust me, if thy power to do the most common things were stopped, thou shouldest feel what a precious thing it were, and what thanks ought to be given to God therefore. Moreover put no difference between works, but whatsoever comes into thy hands that do, as time, place, and occasion giveth, and as God hath put thee in degree high or low. For as to please God, there is no work better than another. God looks not first on thy works as the world does, as though the beautifulness of the works pleased him as it does the world, or as though he had need of them; but God looks first on thy heart, what faith thou hast in his words, how thou believest him, trustest him, and how thou lovest him for his mercy that he hath showed thee; he looks with what heart thou workest, and not what thou workest, how thou acceptest the degree that he hath put thee in, and not of what degree thou art, whether thou art an apostle or a shoemaker.

Set this example before thine eyes. Thou art a kitchen page, and washest thy master's dishes, another is an apostle, and preaches the word of God. Of this apostle hark what Paul saith, (1 Cor. ix.) "If I preach, I have nought to rejoice in, for necessity is put unto me; as who should say, God hath made me so. Wo is unto me if I preach not." If I do it willingly, then have I my reward, that is, then am I sure that God's Spirit is in me, and that I am elect to eternal life. If I do it against my will, an office is committed unto me; that is, if I do it not of love to God, but to get a living thereby, and for a worldly purpose, and had rather otherwise live, then I do that office which God hath put me in, and yet please not God myself. Note now, if this apostle preach not, as many do not, who not only make themselves apostles, but also compel men to take them for greater than apostles, yea, for greater than Christ himself; then wo is unto him, that is, his damnation is just. If he preach and his heart be not right, yet he ministers the office that God has put him in, and they that have the Spirit of God, hear the voice of God,

yea, though he speak in an ass. Moreover, howsoever he preaches he has not to rejoice in that he preaches. But if he preach willingly, with a true heart, and of conscience to God, then has he his reward, that is, then he feels the earnest of eternal life, and the working of the Spirit of God in him. And as he feels God's goodness and mercy, so be thou sure he feels his own infirmity, weakness, and unworthiness, and mourns and acknowledges his sin, in that the heart will not arise to work with that full desire and love that is in Christ our Lord; nevertheless, he is yet at peace with God, through faith and trust in Christ Jesus. For the earnest of the Spirit that worketh in him, testifieth and beareth witness unto his heart that God hath chosen him, and that his grace shall suffice him, which grace now is not idle in him. In his own works putteth he no trust.

Now thou that ministerest in the kitchen, and art but a kitchen page, receivest all things of the hand of God; thou knowest that God hath put thee in that office; thou submittest thyself to his will, and servest thy master not as a man, but as Christ himself, with a pure heart, according as Paul teaches us; thou puttest thy trust in God, and with him seekest thy reward. Moreover, there is not a good deed done, but thy heart rejoices therein; yea, when thou hearest that the word of God is preached by this apostle, and seest the people turn to God, thou consentest unto the deed; thine heart breaketh out in joy, it springs and leaps in thy breast, that God is honoured: and in thine heart thou doest the same as that apostle doth, and haply with greater delectation, and a more fervent spirit. Now he that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive the reward of a prophet; (Matt. x.) that is, he who consents to the deed of a prophet, and maintains it, the same has the same Spirit and earnest of everlasting life, which the prophet has, and is elect as the prophet is.

Now if thou compare deed to deed, there is difference betwixt washing of dishes, and preaching of the word of God; but as touching to please God, none at all. For neither that nor this pleases, but as far as God has chosen a man, has put his Spirit in him, and purified his heart by faith and trust in Christ.

Let every man therefore wait on the office wherein Christ has put him, and therein serve his brethren. If he be of low degree, let him patiently abide therein, till God

promote him, and exalt him higher. Let kings and head officers seek Christ in their offices, and minister peace and quietness unto the brethren; punish sin, and that with mercy, even with the same sorrow and grief of mind as they would cut off a finger or joint, a leg or arm, of their own body, if there were such disease in them that either they must be cut off, or else all the body must perish.

Let every man, whatsoever craft or occupation he be of, whether brewer, baker, tailor, victualler, merchant, or husbandman, refer his craft and occupation unto the commonwealth, and serve his brethren as he would do Christ himself. Let him buy and sell truly, and not defraud his brethren; and so he shows mercy, and his occupation pleases God. And when thou receivest money for thy labour or wares, thou receivest thy due. For whereinsoever thou ministerest to thy brethren, thy brethren are debtors to give thee wherewith to maintain thyself and household. And let your superfluities succour the poor, of which sort shall ever be some in all towns, and cities, and villages, and that I suppose the greatest number. Remember that we are members of one body, and ought to minister one to another mercifully; and remember that whatsoever we have, it is given us of God, to bestow it on our brethren. Let him that eateth, eat and give God thanks, only let not thy meat pull thine heart from God; and let him that drinketh do likewise. Let him that hath a wife, give God thanks for his liberty, only let not thy wife withdraw thine heart from God, and then thou pleasest God, and hast the word of God for thee. And in all things look on the word of God, and therein put thy trust, and not in a visor, in a disguised garment, and a cut shoe.*

Other texts explained.

Seek the word of God in all things, and without the word of God do nothing, though it appear ever so glorious. Whatsoever is done without the word of God, that count idolatry. "The kingdom of heaven is within us." (Luke xvii.) Wonder therefore at no monstrous shape, nor at any outward thing without the word: for the world was never drawn from God but with an outward show and glorious appearance and shining of hypocrisy, and of feigned and visored fasting, praying, watching, singing,

* The Romish priesthood.

offering, sacrificing, hallowing of superstitious ceremonies, and monstrous disguising.

Take this for an example: John Baptist who had the testimony of Christ and of the gospel, that there never rose a greater among women's children, with his fasting, watching, praying, raiment, and strait living, caused the Jews to mistake, and brought them in doubt whether John were very Christ or not, and yet no scripture or miracle testified it. So greatly the blind nature of man looks on the outward shining of works, and regards not the inward word which speaks to the heart. When they sent to John, asking him whether he were Christ, he denied it. When they asked him what he was, and what he said of himself, he answered not, I am he that watches, prays, drinks no wine nor strong drink, eats neither fish nor flesh, but live upon wild honey and grasshoppers, and wear a coat of camel's hair, and a girdle of a skin; but he said, I am a voice of one that crieth. My words only concern you. Those outward things which ye wonder at, pertain to myself only unto the taming of my body. To you am I a voice only,and that which I preach. My preaching, if it be received into a penitent or repenting heart, shall teach you how to live and please God, according as God shall shed out his grace on every man. John preached repentance, saying, Prepare the Lord's way and make his paths straight. The Lord's way is repentance, and not hypocrisy of man's imagination and invention. It is not possible that the Lord Christ should come to a man, except he know himself and his sin, and truly repent—make his paths straight —the paths are the law, if you understand it aright as God has given it.

Christ saith, (Matt. xvii.) Elias shall first come; that is, shall come before Christ, and restore all things, meaning of John Baptist. John Baptist did restore the law and the scripture unto the right sense and understanding, which the pharisees partly had darkened and made of none effect through their own traditions; Matthew xv. where Christ rebukes them, saying, Why transgress ye the commandments of God through your traditions? and they partly had corrupted it with glosses and false interpretations, so that no man could understand it. Wherefore Christ rebuked them, (Matt. xxiii.) saying, Wo be to you pharisees, hypocrites, which shut up the kingdom of heaven before men; ye enter not yourselves, neither suffer

them that come, to enter in. And they partly did beguile the people and blind their eyes by disguising themselves, as you read in the same chapter, how they made broad and large phylacteries, and did all their works to be seen of men, that the people should wonder at their disguisings and visoring themselves otherwise than God hath made them. And they partly mocked them with hypocrisy of false holiness, in fasting, praying, and alms-giving. (Matt. vi.) This they did for lucre, to be in authority, to sit in the consciences of people, and to be counted as God himself, that people should trust in their holiness, and not in God, as you read in the place above rehearsed ; (Matt. xxiii.) Wo be to you pharisees, hypocrites, which devour widows' houses under a colour of long prayer. Counterfeit* therefore nothing without the word of God ; when thou understandest that, it shall teach thee all things ; how to apply outward things and whereunto to refer them.

Beware of thy good intent, good mind, good affection, or zeal, as they call it. Peter of a good mind and of a good affection or zeal, chid Christ, (Matt. xvi.) because that he said he must go to Jerusalem, and there be slain ; but Christ called him Satan for his labour ; a name that belongs to the devil, and said, That he perceived not godly things, but worldly. Of a good intent, and of a fervent affection to Christ, the sons of Zebedee would have had fire to come down from heaven to consume the Samaritans, (Luke ix.) but Christ rebuked them, saying, that they wist not of what spirit they were : that is, that they understood not how they were altogether worldly and fleshly minded. Peter smote Malchus of a good zeal, but Christ condemned his deed. The very Jews of a good intent and of a good zeal slew Christ, and persecuted the apostles as Paul bears them record. (Rom. x.) I bear them record, saith he, that they have a fervent mind Godward, but not according to knowledge. It is another thing then, to do of a good mind, and to do of knowledge. Labour for knowledge that thou mayest know God's will, and what he would have thee to do. Our mind, intent, and affection or zeal, are blind, and all that we do of them is condemned of God ; and for that cause hath God made a testament between him and us, wherein is contained both what he would have us to do, and what he would

* Imitate, follow after.

have us to ask of him. See therefore that thou do nothing to please God withal, but that which he commands, neither ask any thing of him, but that which he has promised thee. The Jews also, as it appears, (Acts vii.) slew Stephen of a good zeal; because he proved, by the scripture, that God dwells not in churches or temples made with hands. The churches at the beginning were ordained, that the people should resort thither to hear the word of God there preached only, and not for the use wherein they now are. The temple wherein God will be worshipped, is the heart of man. For God is a Spirit (saith Christ, John iv.) and will be worshipped in the spirit and in truth: that is, when a penitent heart consents unto the law of God, and with a strong faith longs for the promises of God. So is God honoured on all sides, in that we count him righteous in all his laws and ordinances, and also trust in all his promises. Other worshipping of God is there none, except we make an idol of him.

"It shall be recompensed thee, at the rising again of the righteous." (Luke xiv.) Read the text before, and thou shalt perceive that Christ does here that same as in Matthew the fifth, that is, he puts us in remembrance of our duty, that we be to the poor as Christ is to us; and also teaches us, how that we can never know whether our love be right, and whether it spring of Christ or no, as long as we are but kind to them only, which do as much for us again. But if we be merciful to the poor, for conscience to God, and of compassion and hearty love; which compassion and love spring of the love we have to God in Christ, for the pure mercy and love that he has showed on us; then have we a sure token that we are beloved of God, and washed in Christ's blood, and elect by Christ's deserving unto eternal life.

The scripture speaks as a father doth to his young son, Do this or that, and then will I love thee; yet the father loves his son first, and studies with all his power and understanding, to overcome his child with love, and with kindness to make him do that which is comely, honest, and good for itself. A kind father and mother love their children even when they are evil, that they would shed their blood to make them better, and to bring them into the right way. And a dutiful child studies not to obtain his father's love with works, but considers with what love his father loves him, and therefore loves again, is glad to do his father's will, and studies to be thankful.

The spirit of the world understands not the speaking of God; neither the spirit of the wise of this world, neither the spirit of philosophers, neither the spirit of Socrates, of Plato, or of Aristotle's ethics, as thou mayest see in the first and second chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians. Yet many are not ashamed to rail and blaspheme, saying, How should he understand the scripture seeing he is no philosopher, neither has seen his metaphysics? Moreover they blaspheme, saying, How can he be a divine, and knows not what is "subjectum in theologia?"*

Nevertheless, as a man, without the spirit of Aristotle or philosophy, may by the Spirit of God understand scripture, even so by the Spirit of God understandeth he that God is to be sought in all the scripture, and in all things; and yet knows not what means "subjectum in theologia," because it is a term of their own making. If you should say to him that has the Spirit of God, The love of God is the keeping of the commandments, and to love a man's neighbour is to show mercy; he would, without arguing or disputing, understand how that of the love of God springs the keeping of his commandments, and of the love to thy neighbour springs mercy. Now Aristotle would deny such speaking, and a Dun's man† would make twenty distinctions. If thou shouldest say, (as saith John in the fourth of his epistle,) How can he that loveth not his neighbour whom he seeth, love God whom he seeth not? Aristotle would say, Lo, a man must first love his neighbour and then God, and out of the love to thy neighbour springs the love to God. But he that feels the working of the Spirit of God, and also from what vengeance the blood of Christ has delivered him, understands that it is impossible to love either father or mother, sister, brother, neighbour, or his own self aright, except it spring out of the love to God; and perceives that the love to a man's neighbour is a sign of the love to God, as good fruit declares a good tree, and that the love to a man's neighbour

* Subject in theology. That which is treated of in theology.

† John Duns Scotus was a famous scholastic divine of the fourteenth century. By the application of the Aristotelian philosophy to divinity, men were led to dispute rather than to explain the truth. Roger Bacon, speaking of the students of his day, said, "The miserable herd of students fatigue themselves, and play the fool, about the miserable translations of Aristotle, and lose their time, their labour, and their expense. Appearances alone engage them, and they have no care to acquire real knowledge, but only to seem knowing in the eyes of the senseless multitude."—*History of the Church of Christ*, cent. xiii. c. v.

accompanies and follows the love of God, as heat accompanies and follows fire.

Likewise when the scripture saith, "Christ shall reward every man at the resurrection, or uprising again, according to his deeds," the spirit of Aristotle's ethics would say, Lo, with the multitude of good works mayest thou, and must thou, obtain everlasting life. And also a place in heaven, high or low, according as thou hast many or few good works; and yet knowest not what a good work means, as Christ speaks of good works, as he that sees not the heart, but outward things only. But he that has God's Spirit understands it. He feels that good works are nothing but fruits of love, compassion, mercifulness, and of a tenderness of heart, which a christian hath to his neighbour; and that love springs of the love which he has to God, to his will and commandments; and he understands also, that the love which man has to God, springs of the infinite love and bottomless mercy which God in Christ showed first to us, as John saith in the epistle and chapter above rehearsed. In this (saith he) appeareth the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to make agreement for our sins. In conclusion, a christian man feels that the unspeakable love and mercy which God hath to us, and that the Spirit which worketh all things that are wrought according to the will of God, and that the love wherewith we love God, and that the love which we have to our neighbour, and that the mercy and compassion which we show to him, and also that the eternal life which is laid up in store for us in Christ, are altogether the gift of God, through Christ's purchasing.

If the scripture said always, Christ shall reward thee according to thy faith, or according to thy hope and trust which thou hast in God, or according to the love thou hast to God and thy neighbour, it were true also, as thou seest, 1 Pet. i. Receiving the end or reward of your faith, the health or salvation of your souls. But the spiritual things could not be known save by their works, as a tree cannot be known but by its fruit. How could I know that I loved my neighbour if occasion never were given me to show mercy unto him? How should I know that I loved God if I never suffered for his sake? How should I know

that God loved me if there were no infirmity, temptation, peril, and jeopardy whence God should deliver me?

"There is no man that forsakes house, or father, or mother, or brethren, or sisters, wife, or children, for the kingdom of heaven's sake, which shall not receive much more in this world, and in the world to come everlasting life." Luke xviii.

Here thou seest that a christian man, in all his works, has respect to nothing but unto the glory of God only, and to the maintaining of the truth of God, and doeth, and leaveth undone all things, of love; to the glory and honour of God only, as Christ teaches in the Lord's prayer.

Moreover when he saith, "He shall receive much more in this world," of a truth, yea, he has received much more already. For except he had felt the infinite mercy, goodness, love, and kindness of God, and the fellowship of the blood of Christ, and the comfort of the Spirit of Christ in his heart, he could never have forsaken any thing for God's sake. Notwithstanding, as saith Mark, chap. x., Whosoever for Christ's sake and the gospel's, forsakes house, brethren, or sisters, &c., he shall receive an hundred fold, houses, brethren, &c.—that is spiritually. For Christ shall be all things unto thee. The angels, all christians, and whosoever doeth the will of the Father, shall be father, mother, sister, and brother unto thee, and all theirs shall be thine. And God shall take care of thee, and minister all things unto thee, as long as thou seekest his honour only. Moreover, if thou wert lord over all the world, yea, of ten worlds, before thou knewest God; yet was not thine appetite quenched, thou didst thirst for more. But if thou seek his honour only, then shall he slake thy thirst, and thou shalt have all that thou desirest, and shalt be content; yea, if thou dwell among infidels, and among the most cruel nations of the world, yet shall He be a father unto thee, and shall defend thee as he did Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the saints whose lives thou readest in the scripture. For all that are past and gone before, are but examples to strengthen our faith and trust in the word of God. It is the same God, and he has sworn to us all that he sware unto them, and is as true as ever he was, and therefore cannot but fulfil his promises to us, as well as he did to them, if we believe as they did.

"The hour shall come when all they that are in the

graves shall hear His voice, (that is to say, Christ's voice,) and shall come forth; they that have done good into the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil into the resurrection of damnation." (John v.) This, and all like texts, declare what follows good works, and that our deeds shall testify for us, or against us at that day; and puts us in remembrance to be diligent, and fervent in doing good. Hereby thou mayest not understand that we obtain the favour of God, and the inheritance of life, through the merits of good works, as hirelings do their wages. For then shouldest thou rob Christ, of whose fulness we have received favour for favour. (John i.) That is, God's favour was so full in Christ, that for his sake he gives us his favour, as Paul also affirms, (Eph. i.) He loved us in his Beloved, by whom we have (saith Paul) redemption through his blood, and forgiveness of sins. The forgiveness of sins, then, is our redemption in Christ, and not the reward of works. In whom (saith he in the same place) he chose us before the making of the world, that is long before we did good works. Through faith in Christ are we also the sons of God, as thou readest, John i. In that they believed on his name, he gave them power to be the sons of God. God, with all his fulness and riches, dwelleth in Christ, and out of Christ must we fetch all things. Thou readest also, John iii. He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life: and he that believeth not shall see no life, but the wrath of God abideth upon him. Here seest thou that the wrath and vengeance of God possesseth every man till faith come. Faith and trust in Christ expels the wrath of God, and brings favour, the Spirit, power to do good, and everlasting life. Moreover, until Christ hath given thee light, thou knowest not wherein stands the goodness of thy works; and until his Spirit has loosed thine heart, thou canst not consent unto good works. All that is good in us, both will and works, comes of the favour of God, through Christ, to whom be all the praise. Amen.

"If any man will do his will, (He means the will of the Father,) he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." (John vii.) This text means not that any man of his own strength, power, and free will, as they call it, can do the will of God before he has received the Spirit and strength of Christ, through faith. But here is meant that which is spoken in

the third of John, when Nicodemus marvelled how it were possible that a man should be born again. Christ answered, That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit; as though he had said, He that hath the Spirit through faith, and is born again, and made anew in Christ, understands the things of the Spirit, and what he that is spiritual, means. But he that is flesh, and as Paul saith, (1 Cor. ii.) a natural man, and led by his blind reason only, can never ascend to the capacity of the Spirit. And he gives an example, saying, The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest his voice, and knowest not whence he cometh, nor whither he goeth: so is every man that is born of the Spirit. He that speaks of the Spirit can never be understood of the natural man, which is but flesh, and savours no more than things of the flesh. So here Christ means, If any man have the Spirit, and consents unto the will of God, this same at once knows what I mean.

"If ye understand these things, happy are ye if ye do them." (John xiii.) A christian man's heart is with the will of God, with the law and commandments of God, and hungers and thirsts after strength to fulfil them; and mourns day and night, desiring God, according to his promises, to give him power to fulfil the will of God with love and desire: then testifies his deed that he is blessed, and that the Spirit which blesses us in Christ is in him, and ministers such strength. The outward deed testifies what is within us, as thou readest, John v. The deeds which I do, testify of me, saith Christ. And John xiii. Hereby shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another. And John xi. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, the same it is that loveth me. And again; He that loveth me keepeth my commandments; and he that loveth me not, keepeth not my commandments—the outward deed testifies of the inward heart. And John xv. If ye shall keep my commandments ye shall continue in my love, as I keep my Father's commandment, and continue in his love. That is, As ye see the love that I have to my Father, in that I keep his commandments, so shall ye see the love that ye have to me, in that ye keep my commandments.

Thou mayest not think that our deeds bless us first, and that we prevent* God and his grace in Christ, as though

* Go before.

we, in our natural gifts, and being as we were born in Adam, looked on the law of God, and of our own strength fulfilled it, and so became righteous, and then, with that righteousness, obtained the favour of God. As philosophers write of righteousness, and as the righteousness of temporal law is, where the law is satisfied with the hypocrisy of the outward deed. For contrary to that readest thou, John xv., Ye have not chosen me, (saith Christ,) but I have chosen you, that ye go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit remain. And in the same chapter: I am a vine, and ye the branches; and without me can ye do nothing. With us, therefore, so goes it. In Adam are we all, as it were, wild crab-trees, of which God chooses whom he will, and plucks them out of Adam, and plants them in the garden of his mercy, and stocks them, and grafts the Spirit of Christ in them, which brings forth the fruit of the will of God; which fruit testifies that God has blessed us in Christ. Note this also; that as long as we live we are yet partly carnal and fleshly, notwithstanding that we are in Christ, and though it be not imputed unto us for Christ's sake, for there abides and remains in us yet of the old Adam, as it were of the stock of the crab-tree; and ever, when opportunity is given him, he shoots forth his branches and leaves, bud, blossom, and fruit; against whom we must fight and subdue him, and change all his nature by a little and a little, with prayer, fasting, and watching; with virtuous meditation and holy works, until we be altogether spirit. The kingdom of heaven, saith Christ, (Matt. xiii.) is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three pecks of meal till all were leavened. The leaven is the Spirit, and we the meal, which must be seasoned with the Spirit by a little and a little, till we be throughout spiritual.

"Which shall reward every man according to his deed." (Rom. ii.) That is, according as the deeds are, so shall every man's reward be; the deeds declare what we are, as the fruit the tree; according to the fruit shall the tree be praised. The reward is given of the mercy and truth of God, and by the deserving and merits of Christ. Whosoever repents, believes the gospel, and puts his trust in Christ's merits, the same is heir with Christ, of eternal life; for assurance whereof, the Spirit of God is poured into his heart as an earnest, which looses him from the bonds of Satan, and gives him desire and strength every

day more and more, according as he is diligent to ask of God for Christ's sake; and eternal life follows good living. I suppose, saith St. Paul, that the afflictions of this world are not worthy of the glory which shall be showed on us—that is to say, that which we here suffer, can never deserve that reward which there shall be given us.

Moreover, if the reward should depend upon the works, no man should be saved; forasmuch as our best deeds, compared to the law, are damnable sin. By the deeds of the law is no flesh justified, as it is written in the third chapter to the Romans. The law justifies not, but utters the sin only, and compels and drives the penitent, or repenting sinner, to flee unto the sanctuary of mercy in the blood of Christ. Also repent we ever so much, be we ever so well willing unto the law of God, yet are we so weak, and the snares and occasions so innumerable, that we fall daily and hourly; so that we could not but despair if the reward depended upon the work. Whosoever ascribes eternal life unto the deserving and merit of works, must fall into one of two inconveniences; either must he be a blind pharisee, not seeing that the law is spiritual and he carnal, and look and rejoice in the outward shining of his deeds, despising the weak, and, in respect of them, justify himself; or else, if he see how that the law is spiritual, and he never able to ascend unto that which the law requires, he must needs despair. Let every christian man, therefore, rejoice in Christ our hope, trust, and righteousness, in whom we are loved, chosen, and accepted unto the inheritance of eternal life; neither presuming in our perfectness, neither despairing in our weakness. The perfecter a man is, the clearer is his sight, and he sees a thousand things which displease him, and also perfectness that cannot be obtained in this life; and therefore he desires to be with Christ, where is no more sin. Let him that is weak, and cannot do that he would fain do, not despair, but turn to Him that is strong, and has promised to give strength to all that ask of him in Christ's name; and complain to God, and desire him to fulfil his promises, and to God commit himself; and he shall, of his mercy and truth strengthen him, and make him feel with what love he is beloved for Christ's sake, though he be ever so weak.

"They are not righteous before God which hear the law; but they which do the law shall be justified." (Rom. ii.) This text is plainer than that it needs to be expounded.

In the chapter before, Paul proves that the natural law helped not the Gentiles, as appears by the laws, statutes, and ordinances which they made in their cities, yet kept they them not. The great keep the small under, for their own profit, with the power of the law. Every man praises the law as far as it is profitable and pleasant unto himself. But when his own appetites should be refrained, then he grudges against the law. Moreover, the apostle proves that no knowledge helped the Gentiles. For though the learned men, as the philosophers, came to the knowledge of God by the creatures of the world, yet had they no power to worship God. In this second chapter he proves that the Jews, though they had the law written, yet it helped them not; they could not keep it, but were idolaters, and were also murderers, adulterers, and whatsoever the law forbad. He concludes, therefore, that the Jew is condemned as well as the Gentile. If hearing of the law only might have justified, then had the Jews been righteous. But it requires that a man do the law if he will be righteous; which, because the Jew did not, he is no less condemned than the Gentile. The publishing and declaring of the law doth but utter a man's sin, and gives neither strength nor help to fulfil the law. The law kills thy conscience, and gives thee no desire to fulfil the law. Faith in Christ gives desire and power to do the law. Now is it true, that he which doeth the law is righteous, but that no man doeth it save he that believes and puts his trust in Christ.

"If any man's work that he hath built upon abide, he shall receive a reward." (1 Cor. iii.) The circumstance of the same chapter, namely, that which goes before and that which follows, declares plainly what is meant. Paul talks of learning, doctrine, or preaching; he saith that he himself laid the foundation, which is Jesus Christ, and that no man can lay any other. He exhorts, therefore, every man to take heed what he builds upon it; and borrows a similitude of the goldsmith who tries his metals with fire, saying that the fire, that is, the judgment of the scripture, shall try every man's work, that is, every man's preaching and doctrine. If any build upon the foundation laid by Paul, I mean Jesus Christ, gold, silver, or precious stones which are all one thing, and signify true doctrine, which, when it is examined, the scripture allows; then shall he have his reward, that is, he shall be sure that his

earning is of God, and that God's Spirit is in him, and that he shall have the reward that Christ has purchased for him. On the other side, if any man build thereon timber, hay, or stubble, which are all one, and signify doctrines of man's imagination, traditions, and fantasies, which stand not with Christ when they are judged and examined by the scripture, he shall suffer damage, but shall be saved himself, yet as it were through fire; that is, it shall be painful unto him that he has lost his labour, and to see his building perish; notwithstanding, if he repent, and embrace the truth in Christ, he shall obtain mercy and be saved. But if Paul were now alive, and would defend his own learning, he should be tried through fire: not through fire of the judgment of scripture, for that light men now utterly refuse, but by the pope's law, and with fire of fagots.

"We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, for to receive every man according to the deeds of his body." (2 Cor. v.) As thy deeds testify of thee, so shall thy reward be. Thy deeds are evil, then is the wrath of God upon thee, and thine heart is evil; and so shall thy reward be, if thou repent not. Fear, therefore, and cry to God for grace, that thou mayest love his laws. And when thou lovest them, cease not till thou have obtained power of God to fulfil them; so shalt thou be sure that a good reward shall follow. Which reward, not thy deeds, but Christ's have purchased for thee; whose purchasing also is that desire which thou hast to God's law, and that might wherewith thou fulfillest them. Remember also, that a reward is rather called that which is given freely, than that which is deserved. That which is deserved, is called, if thou wilt give it the right name, hire or wages. A reward is given freely, to provoke unto love and to make friends.

"Remember, that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, that shall he receive of the Lord;" (Eph. vi.) "Remembering that ye shall receive of the Lord the reward of inheritance." (Col. iii.) These two texts are exceeding plain. Paul means, as Peter does, (1 Pet. ii.) that servants should obey their masters with all their hearts, and with good will, though they were ever so evil. Yea, he will that all who are under power obey, even of heart, and of conscience to God, because God will have it so, be the rulers ever so wicked. The children must obey their

father and mother, be they ever so cruel or unkind; likewise the wife her husband, the servant his master, the subjects and commons their lord or king. Why? For ye serve the Lord, saith he. (Coloss. iii.) We are Christ's, and Christ has bought us, as thou readest, (Romans xiv. 1 Cor. vi. 1 Peter i.) Christ is our Lord, and we are his possession, and his also is the commandment. Now, the cruelty and churlishness of father and mother, of husband, master, lord, or king, ought not to cause us to hate the commandment of our so kind a Lord Christ; who spared not his blood for our sakes; who also hath purchased for us with his blood that reward of eternal life, which life shall follow the patience of good living, and whereunto our good deeds testify that we are chosen. Furthermore, we are so carnal, that if the rulers be good, we cannot know whether we keep the commandment for the love that we have to Christ, and to God through him, or not. But and if thou canst find in thine heart, to do good unto him that rewards thee evil again, then art thou sure that the same spirit is in thee that is in Christ. And it follows in the same chapter to the Colossians, He that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong that he hath done. That is, God shall avenge thee abundantly, who sees that wrong is done unto thee, and yet suffers it for a time, that thou mightest feel thy patience and the working of his Spirit in thee, and be made perfect. Therefore, see that thou do not once desire vengeance, but remit all vengeance unto God, as Christ did, who, Peter saith, when he was reviled, reviled not again, neither threatened when he suffered. Unto such obedience, unto such patience, unto such a poor heart, and unto such feeling, is Paul's meaning to bring all men, and not unto the vain disputing of them that ascribe so high a place in heaven unto their peeled* merits; and who, as they feel not the working of God's Spirit, so obey they no man. If the king do unto them but right, they will interdict the whole realm, curse, excommunicate, and send them down far beneath the bottom of hell, as they have brought the people out of their wits, and made them mad to believe.

"Thy prayers and alms are come up into remembrance in the presence of God," (Acts x.) that is, God forgets thee not; though he comes not at the first calling, he looks on and beholds thy prayers and alms. Prayer comes from

* Bald, empty.

the heart. God looks first on the heart and then on the deed, as you read, Gen. iv. God beheld or looked first on Abel, and then on his offering. If the heart be impure the deed verily pleases not, as thou seest in Cain. Mark the order; in the beginning of the chapter you read, There was a certain man named Cornelius who feared God, gave much alms, and prayed to God alway. He feared God; that is, he trembled and feared to break the commandments of God. Then prayed he alway. Prayer is the fruit, effect, deed, or act of faith, and is nothing but the longing of the heart for those things which a man lacketh, and which God has promised to give him. He also doeth alms; alms is the fruit, effect, or deed of compassion and pity, which we have to our neighbour. Oh what a glorious faith, and how right, which so trusts God, and believes his promises, that it fears to break his commandments, and is also merciful unto its neighbour! This is that faith whereof thou readest, namely, in Peter, Paul, and John, that we are thereby both justified and saved; and whosoever imagines any other faith, deceives himself, and is a vain disputer, and a brawler about words, and has no feeling in his heart.

Though thou consentest to the law, that it is good, righteous, and holy; though thou sorrowest and repentest, because thou hast broken it; though thou mournest because thou hast no strength to fulfil it, yet art not thou thereby at one with God. Yea, thou shouldest shortly despair and blaspheme God, if the promises of forgiveness and of help were not thereby, and faith in thine heart to believe them; faith therefore setteth thee at one with God.

Faith prays always. For she hath always her infirmities and weaknesses before her eyes, and also God's promises; for which she always longs, and in all places. But blind unbelief prays not always, nor in all places, but in the church only; and that in a church where it is not lawful to preach God's promises, neither to teach men to trust therein. Faith, when she prays, sets not her good deeds before her, saying, Lord, for my good deeds do this or that; nor bargains with God, saying, Lord, grant me this, or do this or that, and I will do this or that for thee; as mumble so much daily,* go so far, or fast this or that fast, enter this religion or that, with such other points of unbelief, yea, rather idolatry; but she sets her infirmities and

* Mutter so many prayers each day.

her need before her face, and also God's promises, saying, Lord, for thy mercy and truth which thou hast sworn, be merciful unto me, and pluck me out of this prison and out of this hell, and loose the bonds of Satan, and give me power to glorify thy name. Faith therefore justifies in the heart and before God, and the deeds justify outwardly before the world, that is, testify only before men, what we are inwardly before God.

"Whosoever looketh in the perfect law of liberty and continueth therein, if he be not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, he shall be happy in his deed." (James i.) The law of liberty is that which requires a free heart; or if thou fulfil it, declares a free heart, loosed from the bonds of Satan. The preaching of the law makes no man free, but binds, for it is the key that binds all consciences unto eternal damnation, when it is preached; as the promises or gospel is the key that looses all consciences that repent, when they are bound through preaching of the law. He shall be happy in his deed—that is, by his deed shall he know that he is happy and blessed of God, who has given him a good heart, and power to fulfil the law; by hearing the law thou shalt not know that thou art blessed, but if thou do it, it declares that thou art happy and blessed.

Works good through faith.

"Was not Abraham justified by his deeds when he offered his son Isaac upon the altar?" (James iii.) His deed justified him before the world; that is, it declared and uttered the faith which both justified him before God, and wrought that wonderful work, as James also affirms.

"Was not Rahab the harlot justified when she received the messengers, and sent them out another way?" (James iii.) That is likewise outwardly, but before God she was justified by faith which wrought that outward deed, as thou mayest see, Joshua, chapter ii. She had heard what God had done in Egypt, in the Red Sea, in the desert, and unto the two kings of the Amorites, Sihon and Og. And she confessed, saying, Your Lord God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath. She also believed that God, as he had promised the children of Israel, would give them the land wherein she dwelt, and she consented thereunto; she submitted herself unto the will of God, and helped God, as much as in her was, and saved his spies and messengers. The others feared that which she believed, and

resisted God with all their might, and had no power to submit themselves unto the will of God. And therefore they perished, and she was saved, and that through faith; as we read Hebrews the eleventh, where thou mayest see how the holy fathers were saved through faith, and how faith wrought in them. Faith is the goodness of all the deeds that are done within the law of God, and makes them good and glorious, seem they ever so vile; and unbelief makes them damnable, seem they ever so glorious.

As pertaining to that which James in this third chapter saith, What availeth though a man say that he hath faith if he have no deeds? can faith save him? And again, Faith without deeds is dead in itself; and the devils believe and tremble: and as the body without the spirit is dead, even so faith without deeds is dead. It is manifest and clear, that he means not of the faith whereof Peter and Paul speak in their epistles; also John in his gospel and first epistle, and Christ in the gospel, when he saith, Thy faith hath made thee safe, be it to thee according to thy faith; or great is thy faith, and so forth: and of which James himself speaks in the first chapter, saying, Of his own will begat he us with the word of life; that is, in believing the promises wherein is life, we are made the sons of God.

Which I also prove this wise: Paul saith, How shall or how can they believe without a preacher? how should they preach except they were sent? Now I pray you, when was it heard that God sent any man to preach unto the devils, or that he made them any good promise? He threatens them often, but never sent any ambassadors to preach any atonement between him and them. Take an example that thou mayest understand: let there be two poor men both destitute of raiment in a cold winter; the one strong that he feels no grief, the other grievously mourning for pain of the cold. I then come by, and, moved with pity and compassion, say unto him that feels his disease, Come to such a place and I will give thee raiment sufficient. He believes, comes, and obtains that which I have promised. That other sees all this and knows it, but partakes of nought, for he has no faith, and that is because there is no promise made him. So is it of the devils, the devils have no faith, for faith is but an earnest believing of God's promises. Now there are no promises made unto the devils, but sore threatenings. The old

philosophers knew that there was one God, but yet they had no faith, for they had no power to seek his will, neither to worship him. The Turks and the Saracens know that there is one God, but yet they have no faith, for they have no power to worship God in spirit, to seek his pleasure, and to submit them unto his will. They made an idol of God, as we do for the most part, and worshipped him every man after his own imagination, and for a sundry purpose. What we will have done, that must God do, and to do our will worship we hymn and pray unto him; but what God will have done, that will neither Turk nor Saracen, nor the most part of us do. Whatsoever we imagine righteous, that must God admit; but God's righteousness our hearts will not admit. Take another example: let there be two such as I spake of before, and I promise both; and the one because he feels not his disease comes not; so is it of God's promises; no man is helped by them but sinners that feel their sins, mourn and sorrow for them, and repent with all their hearts. For John the Baptist went before Christ and preached repentance; that is, he preached the law of God aright, and brought the people to the knowledge of themselves, and unto the fear of God, and then sent them unto Christ to be healed. For in Christ, and for his sake only, God has promised to receive us unto mercy, to forgive us, and to give us power to resist sin.

How shall God save thee, when thou knowest not thy nation? how shall Christ deliver thee from sin, when thou wilt not acknowledge thy sin? Now I pray thee, how many thousands are there of them that say, I believe that Christ was born of a virgin, that he died, that he rose again, and so forth, and thou canst not bring them to believe that they have any sin at all! How many are there of the same sort, whom thou canst not make believe that a thousand things are sin which God condemneth for sin all the scripture throughout! as to buy as good cheap as he can, and to sell as dear as he can; to raise the market of corn and victuals for his own advantage, without respect of his neighbour, or of the poor of the commonwealth, and such like. Moreover how many hundred thousand are there, who when they have sinned, and acknowledge their sins, yet they trust in a bald ceremony, or in a filthy friar's coat and merits, or in the prayers of them that devour widows' houses, and eat the poor out of house and harbour; in a thing of his own imagination, in

a foolish dream, and a false vision; and not in Christ's blood, and in the truth that God has sworn! All these are faithless, for they follow their own righteousness, and are disobedient unto the righteousness of God; both unto the righteousness of God's law, wherewith he condemneth all our deeds, (for though some of them see their sins for fear of pain, yet had they rather that such deeds were no sin,) and also unto the righteousness of the truth of God in his promises, whereby he saves all that repent and believe them. For though they believe that Christ died, yet believe they not that he died for their sins, and that his death is a sufficient satisfaction for their sins, and that God for his sake will be a Father unto them, and give them power to resist sin.

Paul saith to the Romans, in the tenth chapter, If thou confess with thy mouth that Jesus is the Lord, and believe with thine heart that God raised him up from death, thou shalt be safe. That is, if thou believe he raised him up again for thy salvation. Many believe that God is rich and almighty, but not unto themselves, and that he will be good unto them, and defend them, and be their God.

Pharaoh, for pain of the plagues, was compelled to confess his sins, but had yet no power to submit himself unto the will of God, and to let the children of Israel go, and to lose so great profit for God's pleasure. As our prelates confess their sins, saying, Though we be ever so evil, yet have we the power. And again, the scribes and pharisees, say they, sat in Moses's seat; do as they teach, but not as they do; thus confess they that they are abominable. But to the second I answer, If they sat on Christ's seat they would preach Christ's doctrine, now they preach their own traditions, and therefore are not to be heard. If they preached Christ, we ought to hear them though they were ever so abominable, as they of themselves confess, and yet have no power to amend, neither to let loose Christ's flock to serve God in the Spirit, which they hold captive, compelling them to serve their false lies. The devils felt the power of Christ, and were compelled against their wills to confess that he was the Son of God, but had no power to be content therewith, neither to consent unto the ordinance and eternal counsel of the everlasting God; as our prelates feel the power of God against them, but yet have no grace to give room unto Christ, because that they, as the devil's

nature is, will themselves sit in his holy temple, that is, the consciences of men.

Simon Magus believed (Acts viii.) with such a faith as the devils confessed Christ, but had no right faith, as thou seest in the said chapter. For he repented not, consenting unto the law of God. Neither did he believe the promises nor longed for them, but wondered only at the miracles which Philip wrought, and because he himself in Philip's presence had no power to use his witchcraft, sorcery, and magic, wherewith he mocked and deluded the understandings of the people. He would have bought the gift of God, to have sold it much dearer, as his successors now do, and not the successors of Simon Peter. For were they Simon Peter's successors, they would preach Christ as he did; but they are Simon Magus's successors, of whom Simon Peter well prophesied, (2 Pet. ii.) saying, There were false prophets among the people (meaning of the Jews) even as there shall be false teachers or doctors among you, which privily shall bring in damnable sects, (sects is part-taking, as one holds of Francis, another of Dominic, which also Paul rebukes, 1 Cor. i. and iii.) even denying the Lord that bought them (for they desire not to be saved by Christ, neither suffer any man to preach him to others). And many shall follow their damnable ways; (thou wilt say, Shall God suffer so many to go out of the right way so long? I answer, many must follow their damnable ways, or else Peter must be a false prophet,) by which the way of truth shall be evil spoken of, (as it is now at this present time, for it is heresy to preach the truth,) and through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you. Of their merchandise and covetousness it needs not to rehearse, for they that are blind see it evidently.

Thus seest thou, that when James saith, Faith without deeds is dead, and as the body without the spirit is dead, so is faith without deeds, and the devils believe—he means not the faith and trust that we have in the truth of God's promises, and his holy testament, made unto us in Christ's blood; which faith follows repentance, and the consent of the heart unto the law of God, and makes a man safe, and sets him at peace with God. But he speaks of that false opinion and imagination wherewith some say, I believe that Christ was born of a virgin, and that he died, and so forth. That they verily believe, and so strongly, that they are ready to slay whosoever would say the contrary. But

they believe not that Christ died for their sins, and that his death has appeased the wrath of God, and has obtained for them all that God has promised in the scripture. For how can they believe that Christ died for their sins, and that he is their only and sufficient Saviour, seeing that they seek other Saviours of their own imagination, and seeing that they feel not their sins, neither repent, except that some repent, as I above said, for fear of pain, but for no love, nor consent unto the law of God, nor longing that they have for those good promises which he has made them in Christ's blood. If they repented and loved the law of God, and longed for that help which God has promised to give to all that call on him for Christ's sake, then verily must God's truth give them power and strength to do good works, whensoever occasion were given, or God must be a false God. But let God be true, and every man a liar, as scripture saith. For the truth of God lasts for ever; to whom only be all honour and glory for ever. Amen.

Be not offended, most dear reader, that divers things are overseen, through negligence, in this little treatise. For verily the chance was such, that I marvel that it is so well as it is. Moreover, it becomes the book even so to come as a mourner, and in vile apparel to wait on his Master, who now shows himself again, not in honour and glory, as between Moses and Elias, but in rebuke and shame, as between two murderers, to try his true friends, and to prove whether there be any faith on the earth.

THE

OBEDIENCE OF A CHRISTIAN MAN;

Set forth by William Tindal, 1528, October 2.

The title and preface of this treatise explain the design with which it was written—to show the real duties of a christian, and to expose the usurpations of the Romish ecclesiastics. It is divided into several chapters, in which various subjects are fully treated upon in the following order. In the first place, Tindal states—the obedience of all degrees approved by God's word—of children—of wives—of servants—of subjects, wherein he writes "against the pope's false power." Then he proceeds to the office or duty of a father—of a husband—of a master—of landlords—of king's judges and officers; shewing how each ought to rule. The manner in which the papal power had usurped upon these authorities then leads him to speak of antichrist—of the sacraments—of the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ—of baptism—wedlock—orders—penance—confession—contrition—satisfaction—absolution—confirmation—anointing—of miracles and worshipping of saints—of prayer. He then explains the four senses of scripture, and concludes with "a compendious rehearsal of that which goeth before." The effects produced by this work have already been noticed in the life of Tindal. It exposes very fully the corruptions of popery, and the miserable bondage of this country before the Reformation. A part of the preface, with the summary review of the contents, as given in the concluding portion, is printed here, as better calculated for the present work than the entire treatise.

FROM THE PREFACE

TO THE

OBEDIENCE OF A CHRISTIAN MAN.

WILLIAM TINDAL, OTHERWISE CALLED HITCHINS, TO THE READER.

Grace, peace, and increase of knowledge in our Lord Jesus Christ be with thee, reader, and with all that call on the name of the Lord unfeignedly, and with a pure conscience. Amen.

Let it not make thee despair, neither yet discourage thee, O reader, that it is forbidden thee on pain of life and goods, or that it is made breaking of the king's peace, or treason unto his highness, to read the word of thy soul's health.* But much rather be bold in the Lord, and comfort thy soul, forasmuch as thou art sure, and hast an evident token through such persecution, that it is the true word of God; which word is ever hated of the world, neither was ever without persecution, as thou seest in all the stories of the bible, both of the new testament and also of the old; neither can be, any more than the sun can be without his light. And forasmuch as, contrariwise, thou art sure that the pope's doctrine is not of God, which, as thou seest, is so agreeable unto the world, and is so received of the world, or which rather so receives the world and the pleasures of the world, and seeks nothing but the possessions of the world, and authority in the world, and to bear a rule in the world; and persecutes the word of God, and with all wiliness drives the people from it, and with false and sophistical reasons makes them afraid of it: yea, curses them and excommunicates them, and brings them to believe that they be damned if they look on it; and that it is but doctrine to deceive men; and also moves the blind powers of the world to slay, with fire, water, and sword, all that cleave unto it: for the world loves that which is his, and hateth that which is chosen out of the world to serve God in the Spirit, as Christ saith to his disciples, (John xv.)

* Salvation.

"If ye were of the world the world would love his own; but I have chosen you out of the world, and therefore the world hateth you."

Another comfort hast thou—that as the weak powers of the world defend the doctrine of the world, so the mighty power of God defends the doctrine of God; which thou shalt evidently perceive if thou call to mind the wonderful deeds which God has ever wrought for his word in extreme necessity, since the world began, beyond all man's reason; which are written, as Paul saith, (Rom. xv.) for our learning and not for our deceiving, that we, through patience and comfort of the scripture, might have hope. The nature of God's word is to fight against hypocrites. It began at Abel, and has continued ever since, and shall, I doubt not, until the last day. And the hypocrites have always the world on their side, as thou seest in the time of Christ; they had the elders, that is, the rulers of the Jews on their side; they had Pilate and the emperor's power on their side; they had Herod also on their side. Moreover, they brought all their worldly wisdom to pass, and all that they could think or imagine to serve for their purpose. First, to fear the people withal, they excommunicated all that believed in Christ, and put them out of the temple, as thou seest John ix. Secondly, they found the means to have him condemned by the emperor's power, and made it treason to Cæsar to believe in him. Thirdly, they obtained to have him hanged as a thief or a murderer, which according to their carnal wisdom was a cause above all causes that no man should believe in him. For the Jews take it for a sure token of everlasting damnation, if a man be hanged; for it is written in their law, (Deut. xxi.) Cursed is whosoever hangeth on a tree. Moses also in the same place commands, If any man be hanged, to take him down the same day and bury him, for fear of polluting or defiling the country; that is, lest they should bring the wrath and curse of God upon them. And therefore the wicked Jews themselves, who with such venomous hate persecuted the doctrine of Christ, and did all the shame that they could do unto him, though they would fain have had Christ to hang still on the cross, and there to rot, as he should have done by the emperor's law; yet for fear of defiling their sabbath, and of bringing the wrath and curse of God upon them, they begged of Pilate to take him down, (John xix.) which was against themselves.

Finally, when they had done all they could, and what they thought sufficient, and when Christ was in the heart of the earth, and so many bills and poleaxes* about him, to keep him down, and when it was past man's help, then God helped. When man could not bring him again, God's truth fetched him again. The oath that God had sworn to Abraham, to David, and to other holy fathers and prophets, raised him up again to bless and save all that believe in him. Thus the wisdom of the hypocrites became foolishness. Lo, this was written for thy learning and comfort.

How wonderfully were the children of Israel locked in Egypt! What tribulation, cumbrance, and adversity were they in! The land also that was promised them was far off, and full of great cities, walled with high walls up to the sky, and inhabited with great giants; yet God's truth brought them out of Egypt, and planted them in the land of the giants. This is also written for our learning: for there is no power against God's, neither any wisdom against God's wisdom: he is stronger and wiser than all his enemies. What did it help Pharaoh to drown the men-children? so little, I fear not, shall it at the last help the pope and his bishops, to burn our men-children, who manfully confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord, and that there is no other name given unto men to be saved by, as Peter testifies, Acts iv.

Who dried up the Red Sea? Who slew Goliath? Who did all those wonderful deeds which thou readest in the bible? Who delivered the Israelites evermore from thraldom and bondage, as soon as they repented and turned to God? Faith verily; and God's truth, and the trust in the promises which he had made. Read the eleventh to the Hebrews for thy consolation.

When the children of Israel were ready to despair for the greatness and the multitude of the giants, Moses ever comforted them, saying, Remember what your Lord God hath done for you in Egypt, his wonderful plagues, his miracles, his wonders, his mighty hand, his stretched out arm, and what he hath done for you hitherto. He shall destroy them, he shall take their hearts from them, and make them fear and fly before you. He shall storm them, and stir up a tempest among them, and scatter them, and bring them to nought. He hath sworn, he is true, he will fulfil the promises that he hath made unto Abraham, Isaac,

* Weapons of the soldiers.

and Jacob. This is written for our learning: for verily he is a true God, and is our God as well as theirs, and his promises are with us, as well as with them; and he is present with us as well as he was with them. If we ask, we shall obtain; if we knock, he will open; if we seek, we shall find; if we thirst, his truth shall fulfil our desire. Christ is with us until the world's end. (Matt. the last.) Let this little flock be bold therefore; for if God be on our side, what matter maketh it who be against us? be they bishops, cardinals, popes, or whatsoever names they will.

Mark this also; If God send thee to the sea, and promise to go with thee, and to bring thee safe to land, he will raise up a tempest against thee, to prove whether thou wilt abide by his word; and that thou mayest feel thy faith and perceive his goodness. For if it were always fair weather, and thou never brought into such jeopardy whence his mercy only delivered thee, thy faith would be but a presumption, and thou wouldest be ever unthankful to God and merciless unto thy neighbour.

If God promises riches, the way thereto is poverty. Whom he loves, him he chastens; whom he exalts, he casts down; whom he saves, he condemns first; he brings no man to heaven, except he send him to hell first; if he promise life, he slays first; when he builds, he casts all down first; he is no patcher, he cannot build on another's foundation; he will not work until all be past remedy, and brought unto such a case, that men may see, how his hand, his power, his mercy, his goodness, and truth, have wrought altogether. He will let no man be partaker with him of his praise and glory: his works are wonderful, and contrary unto man's works. Who ever, save he, delivered his own Son, his only Son, his dear Son, unto the death, and that for his enemies' sake; to win his enemy; to overcome him with love; that he might see love, and love again, and of love do likewise to other men, and overcome them with well doing?

Joseph saw the sun and the moon, and the eleven stars worshipping him. Nevertheless, ere that came to pass, God laid him where he could neither see sun nor moon, neither any star of the sky, and that for years; and also undeservedly; to nurture him, to humble, to make him meek, and to teach him God's ways, and to make him apt and meet for the place and honour, against he came to it, that he might perceive and feel that it came of God, and

that he might be strong in the Spirit to minister it in a godly manner.

He promised the children of Israel a land with rivers of milk and honey; but brought them for the space of forty years into a land, where not only rivers of milk and honey were not, but where so much as a drop of water was not; to nurture them, and to teach them, as a father doth his son, and to do them good at the latter end; and that they might be strong in their spirit and souls, to use his gifts and benefits godly, and after his will.

He promised David a kingdom, and immediately stirred up king Saul against him to persecute him; to hunt him as men do hares with greyhounds, and to ferret him out of every hole, and that for the space of many years. This was to tame him, to make him meek; to kill his lusts; to make him feel other men's diseases; to make him merciful; to make him understand that he was made a king to minister and to serve his brethren, and that he should not think that his subjects were made to minister unto his lusts, and that it were lawful for him to take away from them life and goods at his pleasure.

O that our kings were so nurtured now-a-days! whom our holy bishops teach in a far other manner; saying: Your grace shall take your pleasure; yea, take what pleasure you list, spare nothing; we shall dispense with you, we have power, we are God's vicars: and let us alone with the realm, we shall take pains for you, and see that all things be well: your grace shall but defend the faith only.

Let us, therefore, look diligently whereunto we are called, that we deceive not ourselves. We are called, not to dispute as the pope's disciples do; but to die with Christ, that we may live with him; and to suffer with him, that we may reign with him. We are called unto a kingdom that must be won by suffering only, as a sick man wins health. God is he that doeth all things for us, and fights for us, and we do but suffer only. Christ saith, (John xx.) As my Father sent me, so send I you; and (John xv.), If they persecute me, then shall they persecute you: and Christ saith, (Matt. x.) I send you forth as sheep among wolves. The sheep fight not, but the shepherd fights for them, and cares for them. Be harmless as doves, therefore, saith Christ, and wise as serpents. The doves imagine no defence, nor seek to avenge themselves. The serpent's wisdom is, to keep his head, and those parts

wherein his life rests. Christ is our head, and God's word is that wherein our life rests. To cleave, therefore, fast unto Christ, and unto those promises which God has made us for his sake, is our wisdom. Beware of men, saith he, for they shall deliver you up unto their councils, and shall scourge you; and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake: the brother shall betray, or deliver, the brother to death, and the father the son; and the children shall rise against father and mother, and put them to death. Hear what Christ saith more: The disciple is not greater than his master, neither the servant greater, or better than his lord. If they have called the good man of the house Beelzebub, how much rather shall they call his household servants so? And (Luke xivth.) Christ saith, Which of you, disposed to build a tower, sitteth not down first and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to perform it? Lest when he hath laid the foundation, and then is not able to perform it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build, and was not able to make an end; so likewise, none of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, can be my disciple. Whosoever, therefore, considers not this beforehand—I must jeopard life, goods, honour, worship, and all that there is, for Christ's sake, deceives himself, and makes a mock of himself, to the godless hypocrites and infidels. No man can serve two masters, God and mammon; that is to say, wicked riches also. (Matt. vi.) Thou must love Christ above all things: but that thou dost not if thou be not ready to forsake all for his sake. If thou have forsaken all for his sake, then art thou sure that thou lovest him. Tribulation is our right baptism, and is signified by plunging into the water. We that are baptised in the name of Christ, saith Paul, (Rom. vi.) are baptised to die with him.

The Spirit, through tribulation, purges us, and kills our fleshly wit, our worldly understanding, and belly-wisdom, and fills us full of the wisdom of God. Tribulation is a blessing that comes of God, as Christ witnesses, (Matt. v.) Blessed are they that suffer persecution for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Is not this a comfortable word? Who ought not rather to choose, and desire to be blessed with Christ in a little tribulation, than to be cursed perpetually with the world for a little pleasure?

Prosperity is a real curse, and a thing that God gives to his enemies. Wo be to you rich, saith Christ, (Luke vi.) lo, ye have your consolation: wo be to you that are full, for ye shall hunger: wo be to you that laugh, for ye shall weep: wo be to you when men praise you, for so did their fathers unto the false prophets: yea, and so have our fathers done to the false hypocrites. The hypocrites, with worldly preaching, have not gotten the praise only, but even the possessions also, and the dominion and rule of the whole world.

Tribulation for righteousness is not a blessing only, but also a gift that God gives unto none save his special friends. The apostles (Acts v.) rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer rebuke for Christ's sake. And Paul (2 Tim. iii.) saith, All that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution: and (Phil. i.) he saith, Unto you it is given not only to believe in Christ, but also to suffer for his sake. Here thou seest that it is God's gift to suffer for Christ's sake. Peter (1 Pet. iv.) saith, Happy are ye if ye suffer for the name of Christ; for the glorious Spirit of God resteth in you. Is it not a happy thing, to be sure that thou art sealed with God's Spirit to everlasting life? And, verily, thou art sure thereof, if thou suffer patiently for his sake. By suffering art thou sure; but by persecuting canst thou never be sure: for Paul (Rom. v.) saith, Tribulation maketh feeling; that is, it makes us feel the goodness of God, and his help, and the working of his Spirit. And the Lord said to Paul, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect through weakness. (2 Cor. xii.) Lo, Christ is never strong in us till we are weak. As our strength abates, so the strength of Christ grows in us. When we are quite emptied of our own strength, then are we full of Christ's strength: and look, how much of our own strength remains in us, so much lacks there of the strength of Christ. Therefore saith Paul, Very gladly will I rejoice in my weakness, that the strength of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore have I delight, saith Paul, in infirmities, in rebukes, in need, in persecutions, and in anguish for Christ's sake; for when I am weak then am I strong. Meaning, that the weakness of the flesh is the strength of the Spirit. And by flesh understand wit, wisdom, and all that is in a man before the Spirit of God come; and whatsoever springeth not of the Spirit of God, and of God's word. And of like testimonies is all the scripture full.

Behold, God sets before us a blessing and also a curse. A blessing, verily, and that a glorious and an everlasting blessing, if we suffer tribulation and adversity with our Lord and Saviour Christ. And an everlasting curse, if, for a little pleasure sake, we withdraw ourselves from the chastising and nurture of God, wherewith he teaches all his sons, and fashions them after his godly will, and makes them perfect, as he did Christ, and makes them apt and meet vessels to receive his grace and his Spirit, that they might perceive and feel the exceeding mercy which we have in Christ, and the innumerable blessings, and the unspeakable inheritance, whereto we are called and chosen, and sealed in our Saviour Jesus Christ, unto whom be praise for ever. Amen.

Finally: whom God chooses to reign everlastingly with Christ, him he seals with his mighty Spirit, and pours strength into his heart, to suffer afflictions also with Christ, for bearing witness unto the truth. And this is the difference between the children of God and of salvation, and between the children of the devil and of damnation—that the children of God have power in their hearts to suffer for God's word, which is their life and salvation, their hope and trust, and whereby they live in the soul and spirit before God. And the children of the devil, in time of adversity, flee from Christ, whom they followed feignedly, their hearts not sealed with his holy and mighty Spirit, and get them to the standard of their right father the devil, and take his wages, the pleasures of this world, which are the earnest of everlasting damnation. Which conclusion the twelfth chapter to the Hebrews well confirms, saying, My son, despise not thou the chastising of the Lord, neither faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth, him he chastiseth; yea, and he scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. Lo, persecution and adversity for the truth's sake is God's scourge, and God's rod, and pertains unto all his children indifferently: for when he saith he scourges every son, he makes no exception. Moreover, saith the text, If ye shall endure chastising, God offereth himself unto you as unto sons. What son is it that the Father chastiseth not? If ye be not under correction, (whereof all are partakers,) then are ye bastards, and not sons.

Forasmuch, then, as we must needs be baptized in

tribulations, and pass through the Red Sea, and a great and a fearful wilderness, and a land of cruel giants, into our natural country; yea, and inasmuch as it is a plain earnest that there is no other way into the kingdom of life than through persecution, and suffering of pain, and of very death, after the example of Christ—therefore let us arm our souls with the comfort of the scriptures: how that God is ever ready at hand in time of need to help us; and how that such tyrants and persecutors are but God's scourge, and his rod to chastise us. And as the Father has always in time of correction the rod fast in his hand, so that the rod doth nothing but as the Father moves it; even so God has all tyrants in his hand, and lets them not do whatsoever they would, but as much only as he appoints them to do, and as far as it is necessary for us. And as when the child submits himself unto his father's correction and nurture, and humbles himself altogether unto the will of his father, then the rod is taken away, even so, when we are come unto the knowledge of the right way, and have forsaken our own will, and offer ourselves wholly to the will of God, to walk which way soever he will have us; then turns he the tyrants; or else if they enforce to persecute us any further, he puts them out of the way, according unto the comfortable examples of the scripture.

Moreover, let us arm our souls with the promises both of help and assistance, and also of the glorious reward that follows. Great is your reward in heaven, saith Christ; (Matt. v.) and, He that acknowledges me before men, him will I acknowledge before my Father that is in heaven; (Matt. x.) and, Call on me in time of tribulation, and I will deliver thee; (Psalm lxv.) and, Behold the eyes of the Lord are over them that fear him, and over them that trust in his mercy; to deliver their souls from death, and to feed them in time of hunger. (Psalm xxxiii.) And in Psalm xxxiv. David saith, The Lord is nigh them that are troubled in their hearts, and the meek in spirit will he save. The tribulations of the righteous are many, and out of them all will the Lord deliver them. The Lord keepeth all the bones of them, so that not one of them shall be bruised. The Lord shall redeem the souls of his servants. And of such like consolations all the Psalms are full—would to God that, when ye read them, ye understood them. And, Matthew x. When they deliver you, take no thought what

ye shall say; it shall be given you the same hour what ye shall say: for it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaks in you. The very hairs of your heads are numbered, saith Christ also. (Matt. x.) If God care for our hairs, he much more cares for our souls, which he has sealed with his Holy Spirit. Therefore saith Peter, (1 Pet. v.) Cast all your care upon him; for he careth for you. And Paul (1 Cor. x.) saith, God is true, he will not suffer you to be tempted above your might. And, Psalm lv. Cast thy care upon the Lord.

Let thy care be to prepare thyself with all thy strength; to walk which way he will have thee, and to believe that he will go with thee, and assist thee, and strengthen thee against all tyrants, and deliver thee out of all tribulation. But what way, or by what means he will do it, that commit unto him, and his godly pleasure and wisdom, and cast that care upon him. And though it seem ever so unlikely, or ever so impossible unto natural reason, yet believe steadfastly that he will do it. And then shall he (according to his old use) change the course of the world, even in the twinkling of an eye, and come suddenly upon our giants, as a thief in the night, and compass them in their wiles and worldly wisdom. When they cry Peace, and All is safe; then shall their sorrows begin, as the pangs of a woman that travails with child: and then shall he destroy them, and deliver thee, unto the glorious praise of his mercy and truth. Amen.

Tindal then shows at considerable length, that "the scriptures ought to be in the English tongue," and that "the scripture is the trial of all doctrine and the right touchstone."

EXTRACT

FROM THE

OBEDIENCE OF A CHRISTIAN MAN.

A COMPENDIOUS REHEARSAL OF THAT WHICH GOETH BEFORE.

I HAVE described unto you the obedience of children, servants, wives, and subjects. These four orders are of God's making, and the rules thereof are God's word. He that keeps them shall be blessed: yea, is blessed already, and he that breaketh them shall be cursed. If any person from impatience, or a stubborn and rebellious mind, withdraw himself from any of these, and get him to any other order, let him not think thereby to avoid the vengeance of God in obeying rules and traditions of man's imagination. If thou pollest thine head in the worship of thy father,* and breakest his commandments, shouldest thou so escape? or, if thou paintest thy master's image on a wall and stickest up a candle before it, shouldest thou therewith make satisfaction for the breaking of his commandments? Or, if thou wearest a blue coat in the worship of the king† and breakest his laws, shouldest thou so go quit? Let a man's wife make herself a sister of the charterhouse, and answer her husband, when he bids her hold her peace,‡ My brethren keep silence for me, and see whether she shall so escape. And be thou sure that God is more jealous over his commandments than man is over his, or than any man is over his wife.

Because we are blind, God has appointed in the scripture how we should serve him and please him. As pertaining unto his own person, he is abundantly pleased when we believe his promises and the holy testament which he has made unto us in Christ, and for the mercy which he there showed us, love his commandments. All bodily service must be done to man in God's stead. We must give obedience, honour, toll, tribute, custom, and rent

* If you shave your head from respect to your father.

† As a king's servant.

‡ The monastic order of Carthusians were bound by their vow to keep perpetual silence.

unto whom they belong. Then if thou have ought more to bestow, give unto the poor which are left here in Christ's stead, that we show mercy to them. If we keep the commandments of love, then are we sure that we fulfil the law in the sight of God, and that our blessing shall be everlasting life. Now when we obey patiently, and without grudging, evil princes that oppress us, and persecute us; and are kind and merciful to them that are merciless to us, and do the worst they can to us, and so take all fortune patiently, and kiss whatever cross God lays upon our backs, then are we sure that we keep the commandments of love.

I declared that God has taken all vengeance into his own hands, and will avenge all unright himself—either by the powers or officers which are appointed thereto; or else, if they be negligent, he will send his curses upon the transgressors, and destroy them with his secret judgments. I shewed also that whosoever avenges himself, is condemned in doing the deed, and falls into the hands of the temporal sword, because he takes the office of God upon himself, and robs God of his most high honour, in that he will not patiently abide his judgment. I shewed you of the authority of princes—how they are in God's stead, and how they may not be resisted; do they ever so evil they must be reserved unto the wrath of God. Nevertheless, if they command to do evil we must then disobey, and say, We are otherwise commanded of God; but not rise against them. They will kill us then, sayest thou. Therefore, I say, is a christian called to suffer even the bitter death for his hope's sake, and because he will do no evil.* I shewed also that the kings and rulers, be they ever so evil, are yet a great gift of the goodness of God, and defend us from a thousand things that we see not.

I proved also that all men, without exception, are under the temporal sword, whatsoever names they give themselves. Because the priest is chosen out of the laymen

* In another part of this treatise, Tindal thus distinguishes respecting some of the Romish martyrs. "They have also martyrs which never preached God's word, neither died therefore, but for privileges and liberties which they falsely purchased, contrary unto God's ordinances. Yea, and such saints, though they be dead, yet rob now as fast as ever they did, neither are less covetous now, than when they were alive. I doubt not but that they will make a saint of my lord cardinal (Wolsey,) after the death of us that are now alive and know his juggling and crafty conveyance; and will shrine him gloriously for his mightily defending of the right of the holy church, except we be diligent to leave a commemoration of that Nimrod behind us." Works, Fo. ed. p. 160.

to teach this obedience, is that a lawful cause for him to disobey?* Because he preaches that the layman should not steal, is it therefore lawful for him to steal unpunished? Because thou teachest me that I may not kill, or if I do, the king must kill me again, is it therefore lawful for thee to kill and go free? or rather shouldst not thou who art my guide to teach me the right way, walk therein before me? The priests of the old law with their high bishop Aaron, and all his successors, though they were anointed by God's commandment, and appointed to serve God in his temple, and exempt from all offices, and ministering of worldly matters, were yet nevertheless under the temporal sword, if they brake the laws. Christ saith to Peter, All that take the sword shall perish by the sword. Here is no exception. Paul saith, All souls must obey. Here is no exception. Paul himself is here not exempt. God saith, (Gen. ix.) Whosoever sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed again. Here is no exception.

Moreover Christ became poor, to make other men rich; and bound, to make others free. He left also with his disciples the law of love. Now love seeketh not her own profit, but her neighbour's; love seeketh not her own freedom, but becometh surety and bond to make her neighbour free. The spiritualty, therefore, are condemned by all the laws of God, who through falsehood and disguised hypocrisy have sought so great profit, so great riches, so great authority, and so great liberties; and have so beggared the laymen, and so brought them in subjection and bondage, and so despised them, that they have set up franchises in all towns and villages, for whosoever robs, murders, or slays them, and even for traitors unto the king's person also.†

* The Romish priests at that time were exempt from temporal jurisdiction; a few years before a law had been passed in England, subjecting some of the inferior orders of the ecclesiastics to the same trial as other subjects, for their crimes; but the deacons, priests, and the higher orders were not amenable to any courts but their own, whatever their offences might be.

† Sanctuaries, or places of refuge attached to the principal monasteries and places of popish worship, where criminals might remain in safety, and the magistrates dared not apprehend them. These were abolished in the reigns of Henry VIII. and Edward VI. but some of them were restored by queen Mary. In a procession of the abbot of Westminster and his monks, December 6, 1556, "the sanctuary men" walked; three of them had been guilty of murder, one of them was a son of lord Dacre, who had waylaid and killed a gentleman named West, with circumstances of great aggravation.

I proved also that no king has power to grant them such liberty; but are condemned as well for their giving, as they for their false purchasing. For as God gives the father power over his children, even so gives he him a commandment to execute it, and not to suffer them to do wickedly unpunished, but unto his condemnation, as thou mayest see by Eli, the high priest, &c. And as the master has authority over his servants, even so has he a commandment to govern them. And as the husband is head over his wife, even so has he commandment to rule her appetites, and is condemned, if he suffers her to be a misliver, or submits himself to her, and makes her his head. And even in like manner as God maketh the king head over his realm, even so giveth he him commandment to execute the laws upon all men indifferently.* For the law is God's, and not the king's. The king is but a servant to execute the law of God, and not to rule after his own imagination.

I showed also that the law and the king are to be feared, as things that were given in fire, and in thunder, and lightning, and terrible signs. I showed the cause why rulers are evil, and by what means we might obtain better. I showed also how wholesome those bitter medicines, evil princes, are to right christian men.

I declared how those whom God hath made governors in the world ought to rule, if they be christian. They ought to remember that they are heads and arms, to defend the body, to minister peace, health, and wealth, and even to save the body; and that they have received their offices of God, to minister and to do service unto their brethren: king, subject, master, servant, are names in the world, but not in Christ. In Christ we are all one, and even† brethren. No man is his own, but we all are Christ's servants, bought with Christ's blood. Therefore ought no man to seek himself or his own profit; but Christ and his will. In Christ no man ruleth as a king his subjects, or a

He was afterwards whipped before the cross, which penance seems to have been all the punishment he received. "And thus," as Strype observes, "was the abbey restored to its pristine privileges." A few months after, a thief escaped from the Tower, and took refuge in the sanctuary at Westminster, but his case being of an aggravated nature, and he having broken prison, the council ordered that he should be taken from the sanctuary and again imprisoned. The monks however persisted in claiming him, and the criminal was restored to them.—*Strype, Eccles. Memorials*, iii. p. 310, 383.

* Impartially. † Equal.

master his servants; but serveth as one hand doth to another, and as the hands do unto the feet, and the feet to the hands, as thou seest 1 Cor. xii. We also serve not as servants unto masters; but as they which are bought with Christ's blood serve Christ himself. We here are all servants unto Christ. For whatsoever we do one to another in Christ's name, that do we unto Christ, and the reward of that shall we receive of Christ. The king considers his commons as Christ himself, and therefore does them service willingly; seeking no more of them than is sufficient to maintain peace and unity, and to defend the realm. And they obey again, willingly and lovingly, as unto Christ. And of Christ every man seeks his reward.

I warned the judges that they take not an example how to minister their offices from our spiritualty, which are bought and sold to do the will of Satan; but of the scripture, whence they have their authority. Let that which is secret abide secret till God open it, who is the Judge of secrets. For it is more than a cruel thing to break up into a man's heart, and to compel him to put either soul or body in jeopardy, or to shame himself. If Peter, that great pillar, for fear of death, forsook his Master, ought not we to spare weak consciences?

I declared how the king ought to rid his realm from the wily tyranny of the hypocrites, and to bring the hypocrites under his laws: yea, and how he ought to be learned, and to hear, and to look upon the causes himself, which he will punish; and not to believe the hypocrites, and to give them his sword to kill whom they will.

The king ought to count what he hath spent in the pope's quarrel since he was king. The first voyage cost upon fourteen hundred thousand pounds.* Reckon since what hath been spent by sea and land between us and Frenchmen, and Scots, and then in triumphs, and in embassies, and what hath been sent out of the realm secretly;

* The first expedition of king Henry VIII. to France in 1513, wa undertaken principally at the instigation of the pontiff, who sought to promote his own ambitious views. The efforts of the English monarch were successful, but his confederates contrived to obtain the advantages for themselves, although purchased at an immense expense to England, both in carrying on the warfare, and in the magnificence displayed by Henry, who was grossly flattered by the pope, while the latter anxiously endeavoured to increase his power over England. Tindal spoke still more plainly of this expedition, and the crafty proceedings of the pope, in his tract called "The Practice of Prelates.

and all to maintain our holy father, and I doubt not but that will surmount the sum of forty or fifty hundred thousand pounds. For we had no cause to spend one penny but for our holy father. The king therefore ought to make them pay this money every farthing, and fetch it out of their mitres, crosses, shrines, and all manner of treasure of the church, and pay it to his commons again; not that only which the cardinal and his bishops compelled the commons to lend, and made them swear with such an example of tyranny as was never before thought on; but also all that he has gathered of them. Or else, by the consent of the commons, to keep it in store for the defence of the realm. Yea, the king ought to look in the chronicles, what the popes have done to kings in time past, and make them restore it also; and ought to take away from them their lands which they have gotten with their false prayers, and restore them unto the right heirs again; or with consent and advisement turn them unto the maintaining of the poor, and bringing up of youth virtuously, and to maintain necessary officers and ministers to defend the commonwealth.

If he will not do it, then ought the commons to take patience, and to take it for God's scourge, and think that God has blinded the king for their sins' sake, and commit their cause to God: and then shall God make a scourge for them, and drive them out of his temple, according to his wonderful judgment.

On the other side, I have also uttered the wickedness of the spiritualty, the falsehood of the bishops, and juggling of the pope, and how they have disguised themselves; borrowing some of their pomp of the Jews, and some of the Gentiles; and have with subtle wiles turned the obedience that should be given to God's ordinance unto themselves. And how they have put out God's testament and God's truth, and set up their own traditions and lies, in which they have taught the people to believe, and thereby sit in their consciences as God; and have by that means robbed the world of lands and goods, of peace and unity, and of all temporal authority, and have brought the people into ignorance of God, and have heaped the wrath of God upon all realms; and especially upon the kings; whom they have robbed, not of worldly things only, but even of their very natural wits.* They make them believe

* Understandings

that they are most christian, when they live most abominably, and will suffer no man in their realms who believe on Christ; and that they are defenders of the faith, when they burn the gospel and promises of God, out of which all faith springeth.

I showed how they have ministered Christ, king and emperor out of their places; and how they have made them a several kingdom, which they got at the first in deceiving of princes, and now pervert the whole scripture, to prove that they have such authority of God. And lest the laymen should see how falsely they allege the places of the scripture, is the greatest cause of this persecution.

They have feigned confession for the same purpose, to stablish their kingdom withal. All secrets know they thereby. The bishop knows the confession of whom he pleases throughout all his diocese. Yea, and his chancellor commands the ghostly father* to deliver it written. The pope, his cardinals, and bishops, know the confession of the emperor, kings, and of all lords; and by confession they know all their captives. If any believe in Christ, by confession they know him. Shrive thyself where thou wilt, whether at Sion, Charterhouse, or at the Observant's, thy confession is known well enough. And thou, if thou believe in Christ, art waited upon. Wonderful are the things that thereby are wrought. The wife is feared, and compelled to utter not her own only, but also the secrets of her husband, and the servant the secrets of his master. Also, through confession they quench the faith of all the promises of God, and take away the effect and virtue of all the sacraments of Christ.

They have also corrupted the saints' lives with lies and feigned miracles, and have put many things out of the sentence or great curse, as raising of rent and fines, and hiring men out of their houses, and whatsoever wickedness they themselves do; and have put a great part of the stories and chronicles out of the way lest their falsehood should be seen.† For there are no mischiefs or disorder,

* Spiritual father, the priest.

† The great curse or denunciation of wrath against offences was read once every year, and particularly included all offences against the ecclesiastical government.

Polydore Vergil, a Romish writer, compiled a history of England from ancient chronicles, in which he promoted the views of the papacy, and he is said to have destroyed many valuable manuscripts after they had been thus garbled by him.

whether it be in the temporal regiment, or else in the spiritual, whereof they are not the chief causes, and even the very fountain and springs, and as we say, the well-head; so that it is impossible to preach against mischief except you begin at them, or to set any reformation in the world except you reform them first. Now are they hardened and tough as Pharaoh, and will not bow unto any right way or order. And therefore they persecute God's word and the preachers thereof; and on the other side lie await unto all princes, and stir up all mischief in the world, and send them to war, and occupy their minds therewith, or with other voluptuousness, lest they should have leisure to hear the word of God, and to set an order in their realms.*

By them are all things ministered, and by them are all kings ruled: yea, in every king's conscience sit they ere he be king, and persuade every king what they desire, and make them both to believe what they will, and to do what they will. Neither can any king or any realm have rest for their businesses. Behold king Henry the Vth, whom they sent out for such a purpose as they sent out our king that now is. See how the realm is inhabited. Ask where the goodly towns and their walls, and the people that was wont to be in them are become, and where the blood royal of the realm is become also? Turn thine eyes whither thou wilt, and thou shalt see nothing prosperous but their subtle polling. With that it is flowing water; yea, and I trust it will be shortly a full sea.

In all their doings, though they pretend outwardly the honour of God or of the commonwealth, their intent and secret counsel is only to bring all under their power, and to take out of the way whosoever hinders them, or is too mighty for them. As when they send the princes to Jerusalem, to conquer the holy land, and to fight against the Turks, whatsoever they pretend outwardly, their secret intent is, while the princes there conquer them more bishoprics, to conquer their lands in the mean season with their false hypocrisy, and to bring all under them; which thou mayest easily perceive since they will not let us know the faith of Christ. And when they are once on high, then

* Tindal here refers particularly to Henry V., who was induced to commence his wars against France by archbishop Arundel, who thus diverted the king's attention from the luxury and vast possessions of the clergy, which were loudly complained of.

are they tyrants above all tyrants, whether they be Turks or Saracens. How they minister proving of testaments! How causes of wedlock! or if any man die intestate! If a poor man die, and leave his wife and half a dozen young children, and but one cow to find them, that will they have for a mortuary mercilessly; let come of wife and children what will. Yea, let any thing be done against their pleasure, and they will interdict the whole realm, sparing no person.

Read the chronicles of England, out of which yet they have put a great part of their wickedness, and thou shalt find them always both rebellious and disobedient to the kings, and also churlish and unthankful, so that when all the realm gave the king somewhat to maintain him in his right, they would not give a mite. Consider the story of king John, where I doubt not but they have put the best and fairest for themselves, and the worst of king John. For I suppose they make the chronicles themselves. Compare the doings of their holy church (as they ever call it) unto the learning of Christ and of his apostles. Did not the legate of Rome assoil* all the lords of the realm of their due obedience which they owed to the king by the ordinance of God? Would he not have cursed the king with his solemn pomp, because he would have done that office which God commands every king to do, and wherefore God hath put the sword in every king's hand? that is, because king John would have punished a wicked clerk† that had coined false money. The laymen that had not done half so great faults must die, but the clerk must go escape free! Sent not the pope also unto the king of France remission of his sins, to go and conquer king John's realm? So now remission of sins comes not by faith in the testament that God hath made in Christ's blood; but by fighting and murdering for the pope's pleasure. Last of all, was not king John fain to deliver his crown unto the legate, and to yield up his realm unto the pope, wherefore we pay Peter-pence. They might be called the polling-pence of false prophets well enough. They care not by what mischief they come by their purpose. War and conquering of lands is their harvest. The more wicked the people are, the more they have the hypocrites in reverence, the more they fear them, and the more they believe in them. And they that conquer other men's lands, when

* Absolve. † Ecclesiastic.

they die, make them their heirs, to be prayed for for ever. Let there come one conquest more in the realm, and thou shalt see them get yet as much more as they have, if they can keep down God's word, that their juggling come not to light; yea, thou shalt see them take the realm wholly into their hands, and crown one of themselves king thereof. And verily, I see no other likelihood, but that the land shall be shortly conquered. The stars of the scripture promise us none other fortune, inasmuch as we deny Christ with the wicked Jews, and will not have him reign over us: but will be still children of darkness under antichrist, and antichrist's possession, burning the gospel of Christ, and defending a faith that may not stand with his holy testament.

If any man shed blood in the church, it shall be interdicted till he have paid for the hallowing. If he be not able, the parish must pay, or else shall it stand always interdicted. They will be avenged on them that never offended. Full well prophesied Paul of them, in the 2d epistle to Timothy, chap. iii. Some man will say, Wouldest thou that men should fight in the church unpunished? Nay, but let the king ordain a punishment for them, as he does for them that fight in his palace, and let not all the parish be troubled for the fault of one. And as for their hallowing, it is the juggling of antichrist. A christian man is the temple of God and of the Holy Ghost, and hallowed in Christ's blood. A christian man is holy in himself, by reason of the Spirit that dwelleth in him; and the place wherein he is, is holy by reason of him, whether he be in the field or town. A christian husband sanctifies an unchristian wife, and a christian wife an unchristian husband, (as concerning the use of matrimony) saith Paul to the Corinthians. If now, while we seek to be hallowed in Christ, we are found unholy, and must be hallowed by the ground, or place, or walls, then Christ died in vain. Howbeit, antichrist must have wherewith to sit in men's consciences, and to make them fear where is no fear, and to rob them of their faith, and to make them trust in that which cannot help them, and to seek holiness of that which is not holy in itself.

After that the old king of France was brought down out of Italy, mark what pageants have been played, and what are yet a playing to separate us from the emperor, (lest by the help or aid of us he should be able to recover

his right of the pope,) and to couple us to the Frenchmen, whose might the pope ever abuses to keep the emperor from Italy. What prevails it for any king to marry his daughter or his son, or to make any peace or good ordinance for the wealth of his realm! For it shall no longer last than it is profitable to them. Their reason is so secret that the world cannot perceive it. They dissemble those things which they only are cause of, and pretend discord among themselves when they are most agreed. One shall hold this, and another shall dispute the contrary; but the conclusion shall be that which most maintains their falsehood, though God's word be ever so contrary. What have they wrought in our days; yea, and what work they yet, to the perpetual dishonour of the king, and rebuke of the realm, and shame of all the nation, in whatsoever realms they go!

I uttered unto you partly the malicious blindness of the bishop of Rochester,* his juggling, his conveying, his foxy-wiliness, his bo-peep, his wresting, renting, and shameful abusing of the scripture; his oratory and alleging of heretics, and how he would make the apostles authors of blind ceremonies, without signification, contrary to their own doctrine, and have set him for an example to judge all others by. Whatsoever thou art that readest this, I exhort thee in Christ, to compare his sermon and that which I have written, and the scripture together, and judge. There shalt thou find of our holy father's authority, and what it is to be great, and how to know the greatest.

Then follows the cause why laymen cannot rule temporal offices, which is the falsehood of the bishops. There shalt thou find of miracles and ceremonies without signification; of false anointing, and lying signs, and false names; and how the spiritualty are disguised in falsehood, and how they rule the people in darkness, and do all things in the Latin tongue; and of their petty pillage. Their polling is like a consumption, wherein a man complains of feebleness and of faintness, and knows not whence his disease comes; it frets inwardly, and consumes the very marrow of the bones.

There thou seest the cause why it is impossible for kings to come to the knowledge of the truth. For the ecclesiastics lay wait for them, and serve their appetites at all points; and through confession, buy and sell and

* Bishop Fisher, a strenuous supporter of the papacy.

betray both them and all their true friends, and lay baits for them, and never leave them till they have blinded them with their sophistry, and have brought them into their nets. And then when the king is captive, they compel all the rest with violence of the sword. For if any man will not obey them, be it right or wrong, they cite him, suspend him, and curse or excommunicate him. If he then obey not, they deliver him to Pilate, that is to say, unto the temporal officers, to destroy him. Last of all, there findest thou the very cause of all persecution, which is the preaching against hypocrisy.

Then come we to the sacraments, where thou seest that the work of the sacrament saves not, but only the faith in the promise, which the sacrament signifies, justifies us. There hast thou that a priest is only a servant to teach, and whatsoever he takes upon him more than to preach and to minister the sacraments of Christ, (which is also preaching) is falsehood.

Then comes how they juggle through dumb ceremonies, and how they make merchandise with feigned words; as penance, a pœna et a culpa, satisfaction, attrition, character, purgatory pick-purse; and how through confession they make the sacraments and all the promises of none effect or value. There seest thou that absolving is but preaching the promises; and cursing or excommunicating, preaching the law; and of their power, and of their keys, of false miracles, and praying to saints. There seest thou that ceremonies did not the miracles, but faith; even as it was not Moses' rod that did the miracles, but Moses' faith in the promises of God. Thou seest also that to have a faith where God hath not a promise, is idolatry. And there also seest thou how the pope exalts himself above God, and commands him to obey his tyranny. Last of all, thou hast there that no man ought to preach but he that is called.

Then followeth the belly-brotherhood of monks and friars. For Christ hath deserved nought with them. For his sake thou gettest no favour. Thou must offer unto their bellies, and then they pray bitterly for thee. There thou seest that Christ is the only cause; yea, and all the cause why God doth ought for us, and hears our complaint. And there hast thou doctrine how to know and to be sure that thou art elect and hast God's Spirit in thee. Thou hast there learning to try the doctrine of our spirits.

Then follow their four senses of the scripture, of which three (the tropological, allegorical, and anagogical) are no senses; and the fourth, that is the literal sense, which is the true sense, the pope has taken to himself. It may have no other meaning than pleases his fatherhood. We must abide his interpretation. And as he thinks, so must we think, though it be impossible to gather any such meaning of the scripture. Then hast thou the true use of allegories, and how they are nothing but examples borrowed of the scripture to express a text or an open conclusion of the scripture, and as it were to paint it before thine eyes, that thou mayest feel the meaning and the power of the scripture in thine heart. Then comes the use of worldly similitudes, and how they are false prophets which bring a worldly similitude for any other purpose, save to express more plainly that which is contained in an open text. And so are they also which draw the scripture contrary to the open places, and contrary to the example, living, and practising, of Christ, the apostles, and of the holy prophets. And then, finally, hast thou of our holy father's power, and of his keys, and of his binding and excommunicating, and of his cursing and blessing, with examples of every thing.

In the former part of this treatise (fol. ed. p. 130.) *Tindal exposed the erroneous view concerning justification, then advanced by the more moderate advocates of the church of Rome, and which has since been adopted by many nominal followers of Christ, of various denominations. He says,*

Rochester (bishop Fisher) intending to prove that we are justified through holy works, alleges half a text of Paul of the fifth to the Galatians, as his manner is to juggle and convey craftily. Which text he this wise Englishes: "Faith, which is wrought by love." Rochester will have love to go before, and faith to spring out of love. Thus antichrist turns the roots of the tree upward. I must first love a bitter medicine, (according to Rochester's doctrine,) and then believe that it is wholesome—whereas by natural reason, I first hate a bitter medicine, until I am brought to believe the physician that it is wholesome, and that the bitterness shall heal me; and then afterwards I love it of that belief. Does the child love the father first, and then believe that he is his son or heir? or rather, because he

knows that he is his son or heir and beloved, therefore he loves again? John saith, in the third of his first epistle, See what love the Father hath showed upon us, that we should be called his sons. Because we are sons, therefore we love. Now, by faith are we sons, as John saith in the first chapter of his gospel. He gave them power to be the sons of God, in that they believed on his name. And Paul saith, in the third chapter of his epistle to the Galatians, We are all the sons of God, by the faith which is in Jesus Christ. And John, in the said chapter of his epistle, saith, Hereby perceive we love, that he gave his life for us. We could see no love, nor cause to love again, except we believed that he died for us, and that we were saved through his death. And in the chapter following, John saith, Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to make agreement for our sins. So God sent not his Son for any love that we had to him; but of the love that he had to us, sent he his Son, that we might so love, and love again. Paul likewise, in the eighth chapter to the Romans, after he had declared the infinite love of God toward us, in that he spared not his own Son, but gave him for us, crieth out, saying, Who shall separate us from the love of God? Shall persecution, shall a sword? &c. No, saith he; I am sure that no creature shall separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord; as though he should say, We see so great love in God toward us in Christ's death, that though all misfortune should fall on us, we cannot but love again. Now how know we that God loveth us? Verily by faith. So therefore, though Rochester be faithless, yet ought natural reason to have taught him, that love springeth out of faith and knowledge; and not faith and knowledge out of love. But let us see the text. Paul saith thus: In Christ Jesus neither circumcision is any thing worth, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh through love; or which through love is strong or mighty in working, and not which is wrought by love, as the juggler saith. Faith that loveth God's commandments justifieth a man. If thou believe God's promises in Christ, and love his commandments, then art thou safe. If thou love the commandment, then art thou sure that thy faith is unfeigned, and that God's Spirit is in thee.

How faith justifieth before God in the heart, and how love springeth of faith, and compelleth us to work, and

how the works justify before the world, and testify what we are, and certify us that our faith is unfeigned, and that the right Spirit of God is in us, see in my book of the Justifying of Faith, and there shalt thou see all things abundantly. Also of the controversy between Paul and James see there. Nevertheless, when Rochester saith, If faith only justified, then both the devils and also sinners that lie still in sin should be saved—his argument is not worth a straw. For neither the devils nor yet sinners that continue in sin of purpose and delectation, have any such faith as Paul speaks of. For Paul's faith is to believe God's promises. Faith, saith he, (Rom. x.) cometh by hearing, and hearing cometh by the word of God. And how shall they hear without a preacher, and how shall they preach except they be sent? As it is written, saith he, How beautiful are the feet that bring glad tidings of peace, and bring tidings of good things. Now when sent God any messengers unto the devils to preach them peace, or any good thing? The devil hath no promise; he is therefore excluded from Paul's faith. The devil believes that Christ died, but not that he died for his sins. Neither doth any that consents in the heart to continue in sin, believe that Christ died for him. For to believe that Christ died for us, is to see our horrible damnation, and how we were appointed unto eternal pains, and to feel, and to be sure that we are delivered therefrom through Christ; in that we have power to hate our sins, and to love God's commandments. All such repent, and have their hearts loosed out of captivity and bondage of sin, and are therefore justified through faith in Christ. Wicked sinners have no faith, but imaginations and opinions about Christ; as our schoolmen have in their principles, about which they brawl so fast one with another. It is another thing to believe that the king is rich, and that he is rich unto me, and that my part is therein; and that he will not spare a penny of his riches at my need. When I believe that the king is rich, I am not moved. But when I believe that he is rich for me, and that he will never fail me at my need, then love I, and of love am ready to work unto the uttermost of my power.

A

PATHWAY

INTO

THE HOLY SCRIPTURE,

MADE BY WILLIAM TINDAL.

I DO marvel greatly, dearly beloved in Christ, that ever any man should repugn or speak against the scriptures being had in every language, and that of every man. For I thought that no man had been so blind as to ask why light should be showed to them that walk in darkness, where they cannot but stumble, and where to stumble, is the danger of eternal damnation; or so despiteful that he would envy any man, not to say his brother, so necessary a thing; or so bedlam mad as to affirm that good is the natural cause of evil, and that darkness proceeds out of light, that lying should be grounded in truth and verity, and not rather quite the contrary, that light destroys darkness, and verity reproves all manner of lying.

Nevertheless, seeing that it has pleased God to send unto our Englishmen, even to as many as unfeignedly desire it, the scripture in their mother tongue, considering that there are in every place false teachers and blind leaders; that ye should be deceived of no man, I supposed it very necessary to prepare this Pathway into the Scripture for you, that ye might walk surely and ever know the true from the false. And above all, to put you in remembrance of certain points, which are, that ye well understand what these words mean: The old testament, the new testament; the law, the gospel; Moses, Christ; nature, grace; working and believing; deeds and faith Lest we ascribe to the one that which belongs to the other and make of Christ Moses, of the gospel the law, despise

grace and rob faith; and fall from meek learning into idle disputations, brawling and scolding about words.

The old testament is a book, wherein is written the law of God, and the deeds of those who fulfil them, and of those also who fulfil them not.

The new testament is a book, wherein are contained the promises of God, and the deeds of those who believe them or believe them not.

Evangelion (or what we call the gospel) is a Greek word, and signifies good, glad, and joyful tidings, that make a man's heart glad, and make him sing, dance, and leap for joy. As when David had killed Goliath the giant, glad tidings came unto the Jews, that their fearful and cruel enemy was slain, and they delivered out of all danger; for gladness whereof, they sung, danced, and were joyful. In like manner the evangelion of God (which we call gospel, and the new testament) is joyful tidings; and, as some say, a good hearing, published by the apostles throughout all the world, of Christ the right David, how he fought with sin, with death, and the devil, and overcame them. Whereby all men that were in bondage to sin, wounded with death, overcome of the devil, are, without their own merits or deservings, loosed, justified, restored to life, and saved, brought to liberty and reconciled unto the favour of God, and set at one with him again; for which tidings, as many as believe, laud, praise, and thank God; are glad, sing and dance for joy.

This evangelion or gospel (that is to say, such joyful tidings) is called the new testament. Because as a man, when he shall die, appoints his goods to be dealt and distributed after his death among those whom he names to be his heirs; even so Christ, before his death, commanded and appointed that such evangelion, gospel, or tidings, should be declared throughout all the world, and therewith to give unto all that repent and believe, all his goods; that is to say, his life, wherewith he swallowed and devoured up death; his righteousness, wherewith he banished sin; his salvation, wherewith he overcame eternal damnation. Now, the wretched man, that knows himself to be wrapped in sin, and in danger of death and hell, can hear nothing more joyous than such glad and comfortable tidings of Christ. So that he cannot but be glad and laugh from the bottom of his heart, if he believe that the tidings are true.

To strengthen such faith withal, God promised this his evangelion in the old testament by the prophets, as Paul saith, (Rom. i.) How he was chosen out to preach God's evangelion, which he before had promised by the prophets in the scriptures, that treat of his Son who was born of the seed of David. In Gen. iii. 15, God saith to the serpent, I will put hatred between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed, that self seed shall tread thy head under foot. Christ is this woman's seed, he it is that hath trodden under foot the devil's head, that is to say, sin, death, hell, and all his power. For without this seed can no man avoid sin, death, hell, and everlasting damnation.

Again, (Gen. xxii.) God promised Abraham, saying, In thy seed shall all the generations of the earth be blessed. Christ is that Seed of Abraham, saith St. Paul, (Gal. iii.) He hath blessed all the world through the gospel. For where Christ is not, there remains the curse that fell on Adam as soon as he had sinned, so that they are in bondage under the condemnation of sin, death, and hell. Against this curse the gospel now blesses all the world, inasmuch as it crieth openly unto all that acknowledge their sins and repent, saying, Whosoever believeth on the Seed of Abraham shall be blessed, that is, he shall be delivered from sin, death, and hell, and shall henceforth continue righteous, and be saved for ever, as Christ himself saith, (in the eleventh of John,) He that believeth on me shall never more die.

The law saith John, chap. i. was given by Moses: but grace and verity by Jesus Christ. The law, whose minister is Moses, was given to bring us unto the knowledge of ourselves, that we might thereby feel and perceive what we are of nature. The law condemns us and all our deeds, and is called of Paul in 2 Cor. iii., the ministration of death. For it kills our consciences and drives us to desperation, inasmuch as it requires of us that which is impossible for our nature to do. It requires of us the deeds of a whole man. It requires perfect love from the deep bottom and ground of the heart, as well in all things which we suffer, as in the things which we do. But, saith John, in the same place, grace and verity is given us in Christ. So that when the law hath passed upon us, and condemned us to death, which is its nature to do, then we have, in Christ's grace,—that is to say, favour,—promises of life,

of mercy, of pardon, freely by the merits of Christ; and in Christ have we verity and truth, in that God for his sake fulfils all his promises to them that believe. Therefore is the gospel the ministration of life. Paul calls it in the before rehearsed place of 2 Cor. iii. the ministration of the Spirit and of righteousness. In the gospel, when we believe the promises, we receive the Spirit of life, and are justified in the blood of Christ from all things whereof the law condemned us. And we receive love unto the law, and power to fulfil it, and grow therein daily. Of Christ it is written in the before rehearsed John i. This is He of whose abundance or fulness all we have received, grace for grace, or favour for favour. That is to say, for the favour that God hath to his Son Christ, he gives unto us his favour and good will, and all gifts of his grace, as a father to his sons. As Paul affirms, saying, Who loved us in his Beloved, before the creation of the world. So that Christ brings the love of God unto us, and not our own holy works. Christ is made Lord over all, and is called in scripture God's mercy stool; whosoever therefore flees to Christ, can neither hear nor receive of God any other thing save mercy.

In the old testament are many promises, which are nothing else but the evangelion or gospel, to save those that believed them, from the vengeance of the law. And in the new testament is often made mention of the law to condemn them which believe not the promises. Moreover the law and the gospel may never be separate; for the gospel and promises serve but for troubled consciences, which are brought to desperation, and feel the pains of hell and death under the law, and are in captivity and bondage under the law. In all my deeds I must have the law before me to condemn mine imperfectness. For all that I do, be I ever so perfect, is yet damnable sin, when it is compared to the law, which requires the ground and bottom of mine heart. I must therefore have always the law in my sight, that I may be meek in the spirit, and give God all the laud and praise, ascribing to him all righteousness, and to myself all unrighteousness and sin. I must also have the promises before mine eyes, that I despair not; in which promises I see the mercy, favour, and good will of God upon me, in the blood of his Son Christ, which hath made satisfaction for mine imperfectness, and fulfilled for me that which I could not do.

Here may ye perceive that two manner of people are sorely deceived. First, they which justify themselves with outward deeds, in that they abstain outwardly from that which the law forbids, and do outwardly that which the law commands. They compare themselves to open sinners, and in respect of them justify themselves, condemning the open sinners. They set a vail on Moses' face, and see not how the law requires love from the bottom of the heart, and that love only is the fulfilling of the law. If they did they would not condemn their neighbours. Love hideth the multitude of sins, saith St. Peter, in his first epistle. For whom I love from the deep bottom and ground of mine heart, him condemn I not, neither reckon his sins, but suffer his weakness and infirmity, as a mother the weakness of her son, until he grow up unto a perfect man.

Those also are deceived who, without any fear of God, give themselves unto all manner of vices with full consent, and full delectation, having no respect to the law of God, under whose vengeance they are locked up in captivity; but say, God is merciful and Christ died for us, supposing that such dreaming and imagination is that faith which is so greatly commended in holy scripture. Nay, it is not faith, but rather a foolish blind opinion springing of their own corrupt nature, and it is not given them of the Spirit of God, but rather of the spirit of the devil, whose faith, now-a-days, the papists compare and make equal unto the best trust, confidence, and belief that a repenting soul can have in the blood of our Saviour Jesus, unto their own confusion, shame, and uttering what they are within. But true faith is, as saith the apostle Paul, the gift of God, and is given to sinners after the law hath passed upon them, and hath brought their consciences unto the brink of desperation, and sorrows of hell.

They that have this right faith, consent to the law that it is righteous, and good, and justify God which made the law, and have delectation in the law, notwithstanding that they cannot fulfil it as they would, for their weakness; and they abhor whatsoever the law forbids, though they cannot always avoid it. And their great sorrow is, because they cannot fulfil the will of God in the law; and the spirit that is in them crieth to God night and day for strength and help, with tears, as saith Paul, that cannot be expressed with tongue. Of which things the belief of our papists or of

their father, whom they so magnify for his strong faith, hath none experience at all.

The first, that is to say, he which justifies himself with his outward deeds, consents not to the inward law, neither has delectation therein; yea, he would rather that no such law were. So he justifies not God, but hates him as a tyrant, neither cares he for the promises, but will with his own strength be saviour of himself; no wise glorifies he God, though he seem outwardly to do so.

The second, that is to say, the sensual person, as a voluptuous swine, neither fears God in his law, neither is thankful to him for his promises and mercy, which are set forth in Christ to all them that believe.

The right christian man consents to the law, that it is righteous, and justifies God in the law; for he affirms that God is righteous and just, who is author of the law, he believes the promises of God, and justifies God, judging him true, and believing that he will fulfil his promises. With the law he condemns himself and all his deeds, and gives all the praise to God. He believes the promises, and ascribes all truth to God: thus everywhere he justifies God, and praises God.

By nature, through the fall of Adam are we the children of wrath, heirs of the vengeance of God by birth, yea, and from our conception. And we have our fellowship with the devils under the power of darkness and rule of Satan, while we are yet in our mothers' wombs; and though we show not forth the fruits of sin as soon as we are born, yet are we full of the natural poison whereof all sinful deeds spring, and cannot but sin outwardly, be we ever so young, as soon as we are able to work, if occasion be given; for our nature is to do sin, as is the nature of a serpent to sting. And as a serpent yet young, or yet unbrought forth, is full of poison, and cannot afterwards, when the time is come, and occasion given, but bring forth the fruits thereof; and as an adder, a toad, or a snake, is hated of man, not for the evil that it hath done, but for the poison that is in it and the hurt which it cannot but do; so are we hated of God for that natural poison which is conceived and born with us before we do any outward evil. And as the evil, which a venomous worm does, makes it not a serpent; but because it is a venomous worm, it does evil and poisons; and as the fruit makes not the tree evil; but because it is an evil tree, therefore

it brings forth evil fruit, when the season of fruit is; even so our evil deeds do not make us first evil through ignorance and blindness, though evil working hardens us in evil, and makes us worse and worse; but because that of nature we are evil, therefore we both think and do evil, and are under vengeance under the law, convicted to eternal damnation by the law, and are contrary to the will of God in all our will, and in all things consent to the will of the fiend.

By grace, that is to say by favour, we are plucked out of Adam, the ground of all evil, and graffed in Christ the root of all goodness. In Christ, God loved us, his elect and chosen, before the world began, and reserved us unto the knowledge of his Son and of his holy gospel; and when the gospel is preached to us, he opens our hearts, and gives us grace to believe, and puts the Spirit of Christ in us, and we know him as our Father most merciful; and we consent to the law, and love it inwardly in our heart, and desire to fulfil it, and sorrow because we cannot; which will, sin we of frailty ever so much, is sufficient till more strength be given us; the blood of Christ hath made satisfaction for the rest; the blood of Christ hath obtained all things for us of God. Christ is our satisfaction, Redeemer, Deliverer, our Saviour from vengeance and wrath. Observe and mark in Paul's, Peter's, and John's epistles, and in the gospel, what Christ is unto us.

By faith we are saved only in believing the promises. And though faith be never without love and good works, yet is our saving imputed neither to love nor unto good works, but unto faith only. For love and works are under the law, which requires perfection, and the ground and fountain of the heart, and condemns all imperfectness. Now is faith under the promises, which condemn not; but give pardon, grace, mercy, favour, and whatsoever is contained in the promises

Righteousness is divers; for blind reason imagines many manner of righteousnesses. There is the righteousness of works, as I said before, when the heart is away and it is not felt, how the law is spiritual and cannot be fulfilled, but from the bottom of the heart. As the just ministration of all manner of laws, and the observing of them, for a worldly purpose and for our own profit, and not of love unto our neighbour, without any other respect; and moral virtues wherein philosophers put their felicity

and blessedness—all are nothing in the sight of God in respect of the life to come. There is, in like manner, the justifying of ceremonies which some imagine their own-selves, some others counterfeit, saying, in their blind reason, Such holy persons did thus and thus, and they were holy men, therefore if I do so likewise I shall please God; but they have no answer of God that it pleases. The Jews sought righteousness in their ceremonies, which God gave unto them, not to justify, but to describe and paint Christ unto them; of which Jews Paul testifies, saying, that they have affection to God, but not after knowledge; for they go about to establish their own justice, and are not obedient to the justice of righteousness that cometh of God, which is the forgiveness of sin in Christ's blood unto all that repent and believe. The cause verily is, that except a man cast away his own imagination and reason, he cannot perceive God, and understand the virtue and power of the blood of Christ. There is a full righteousness, when the law is fulfilled from the ground of the heart. This neither Peter nor Paul had in this life perfectly, unto the uttermost, so that they could not be perfecter, but they sighed after it. They were so far blessed in Christ, that they hungered and thirsted after it. Paul had this thirst; he consented to the law of God, that it ought so to be, but he found another lust in his members, contrary to the lust and desire of his mind that hindered him, and therefore he cried out saying, Oh, wretched man that I am; who shall deliver me from this body of death? thanks be to God through Jesus Christ. The righteousness which before God is of value, is to believe the promises of God, after the law has confounded the conscience. As when the temporal law oftimes condemns the thief or murderer, and brings him to execution, so that he sees nothing before him but present death, and then comes good tidings, a charter from the king, and delivers him; so likewise when God's law has brought the sinner into knowledge of himself, and has confounded his conscience and opened unto him the wrath and vengeance of God; then comes good tidings; the evangelion shows unto him the promises of God in Christ, and how Christ has purchased pardon for him, has satisfied the law for him, and appeased the wrath of God. And the poor sinner believes, praises, and thanks God through Christ, and breaks out into exceeding inward joy and gladness, for that he has escaped so great wrath,

such heavy vengeance, so fearful and so everlasting a death. And he henceforth is a hungered and athirst after more righteousness, that he might fulfil the law; and mourns continually, commending his weakness unto God in the blood of our Saviour, Christ Jesus.

Here shall you see compendiously and plainly set out, the order and practice of every thing before rehearsed.

The fall of Adam hath made us heirs of the vengeance and wrath of God, and heirs of eternal damnation. And hath brought us into captivity and bondage under the devil. And the devil is our lord, and our ruler, our head, our governor, our prince, yea, and our God. And our will is locked and knit faster unto the will of the devil, than a hundred thousand chains could bind a man unto a post. Unto the devil's will we consent with all our hearts, with all our minds, with all our might, power, strength, will, and desires; so that the law and will of the devil is written as well in our hearts as in our members, and we run headlong after the devil with full sail, and the whole swing of all the power we have; as a stone cast up into the air comes down naturally of its ownself, with all the violence and swing of its own weight. With what poison, deadly and venomous hate, a man hates his enemy! With how great malice of mind inwardly do we slay and murder! With what violence and rage, yea, and with how fervent lust, commit we adultery, fornication, and such like uncleanness! With what pleasure and delectation a glutton inwardly serves his belly! With what diligence we deceive! How busily we seek the things of this world! Whatsoever we do, think, or imagine, is abominable in the sight of God. For we can refer nothing unto the honour of God; neither is his law or will written in our members or in our hearts; neither is there any more power in us to follow the will of God, than in a stone to ascend upward of its ownself. And besides, we are as it were asleep in such deep blindness, that we can neither see nor feel what misery, thraldom, and wretchedness we are in, till Moses come and wake us, and publish the law. When we hear the law truly preached, how we ought to love and honour God with all our strength and might, from the low bottom of the heart; because he hath created us, and both heaven and earth for our sakes, and made us lords thereof; and our neighbours, yea our

enemies, as ourselves inwardly from the ground of the heart, because God hath made them after the likeness of his own image, and they are his sons as well as we; and Christ hath bought them with his blood, and made them heirs of everlasting life as well as us. And how we ought to do whatsoever God biddeth, and abstain from whatsoever God forbiddeth, with all love and meekness, with a fervent and an earnest desire from the centre of the heart, then beginneth the conscience to rage against the law, and against God. No sea, be it ever so great a tempest, is so unquiet. For it is not possible for a natural man to consent to the law, that it should be good, or that God should be righteous who maketh the law; inasmuch as it is contrary unto his nature, and condemneth him and all that he can do, and neither shows him where to fetch help, nor preaches any mercy; but only sets man at variance with God, as Paul witnesses, (Rom. iv.) and provokes him and stirs him to rail on God, and to blaspheme him as a cruel tyrant. For it is not possible for a man, till he be born again, to think that God is righteous to make him of so poisonous a nature, either for his own pleasure, or for the sin of another man, and to give him a law that is impossible for him to do or to consent to; his understanding, reason, and will being so fast glued, yea, nailed and chained unto the will of the devil. Neither can any creature loose the bonds, save the blood of Christ only.

This is the captivity and bondage whence Christ delivered us, redeemed, and loosed us. His blood, his death, his patience in suffering rebukes and wrongs, his prayers and fastings, his meekness and fulfilling of the uttermost point of the law, appeased the wrath of God, brought the favour of God to us again, obtained that God should love us first, and be our Father, and that a merciful Father, who will consider our infirmities and weakness, and will give us his Spirit again, which was taken away in the fall of Adam, to rule, govern, and strengthen us, and to break the bonds of Satan, wherein we were so strait bound. When Christ is thus preached, and the promises rehearsed which are contained in the prophets, in the psalms, and in divers places of the five books of Moses, which preaching is called the gospel or glad tidings; then the hearts of them which are elect and chosen, begin to wax soft and melt at the bounteous mercy of God, and kindness showed of

Christ. For when the evangelion is preached, the Spirit of God enters into them whom God has ordained and appointed unto eternal life, and opens their inward eyes, and works such belief in them. When the woful consciences feel and taste how sweet a thing the bitter death of Christ is, and how merciful and loving God is through Christ's purchasing and merits, they begin to love again, and to consent to the law of God, that it is good and ought so to be, and that God is righteous who made it; and they desire to fulfil the law, even as a sick man desires to be whole, and are a hungered and thirst after more righteousness and after more strength to fulfil the law more perfectly. And in all that they do, or omit and leave undone, they seek God's honour and his will with meekness, ever condemning the imperfectness of their deeds by the law.

Now Christ stands us in double stead, and serves us in two manners.

First, he is our Redeemer, Deliverer, Reconciler, Mediator, Intercessor, Advocate, Attorney, Solicitor, our Hope, Comfort, Shield, Protection, Defender, Strength, Health, Satisfaction, and Salvation. His blood, his death, all that he ever did, is ours. And Christ himself, with all that he is or can do, is ours. His blood-shedding and all that he did, does me as good service as though I myself had done it. And God, as great as he is, is mine, with all that he hath, as a husband is his wife's, through Christ and his purchasing.

Secondly, after we are overcome with love and kindness, and now seek to do the will of God, which is a christian man's nature, then have we in Christ an example to imitate, as Christ himself saith in John, I have given you an example. And in another evangelist he saith, He that will be great among you, shall be your servant and minister, as the Son of man came to minister and not to be ministered unto. And Paul saith, Counterfeit* Christ. And Peter saith, Christ died for you, and left you an example to follow his steps. Whatsoever therefore faith hath received of God through Christ's blood and deserving, that same must love shed out, and bestow it on our neighbours unto their profit, yea, and that though they be our enemies. By faith we receive of God, and by love we give it out again. And that must we do freely after the example of

* Imitate.

Christ, without any other respect, save our neighbour's welfare only, and neither look for reward in earth, nor yet in heaven, for the deserving and merits of our deeds, as friars preach; though we know that good deeds are rewarded both in this life and in the life to come; but of pure love must we bestow ourselves, all that we have, and all that we are able to do, even on our enemies, to bring them to God, considering nothing but their welfare, as Christ did ours. Christ did not his deeds to obtain heaven thereby, that had been madness, heaven was his already, he was heir thereof, it was his by inheritance; but he did them freely for our sakes, considering nothing but our welfare, and to bring the favour of God to us again, and us to God. As no dutiful son that is his father's heir, does his father's will because he would be heir; he is that already by birth, his father gave him that ere he was born, and is more loth that he should go without it, than he himself; but out of pure love he does that which he does. And ask him why he does any thing? he answers, My father bade, it is my father's will, it pleases my father. Bond servants work for hire, children for love. For their father with all he hath, is theirs already. So a christian man does freely all that he does, considers nothing but the will of God, and his neighbour's welfare only. If I live chastely,* I do it not to obtain heaven thereby. For then should I do wrong to the blood of Christ; Christ's blood has obtained me that, Christ's merits have made me heir thereof. He is both door and way thitherward. Neither look I for a higher room in heaven than they shall have which live in wedlock, or were of bad life, if they repent, for that were the pride of Lucifer. But freely to wait on the evangelion; and to avoid the trouble of the world, and occasions that might pluck me therefrom, and to serve my brother withal, even as one hand helps another, or one member another, because one feels another's grief, and the pain of the one is the pain of the other. Whatsoever is done to the least of us, whether it be good or bad, it is done to Christ, and whatsoever is done to my brother, if I be a christian man, that same is done to me. Neither does my brother's pain grieve me less than mine own. Neither rejoice I less at his welfare than at mine own, if I love him as well and as much as myself, as the law commands me. If it were not so, how saith Paul? Let him that rejoiceth, rejoice

* Unmarried, as a priest or monk.

in the Lord, that is to say, Christ, who is Lord over all creatures. If my merits obtained me heaven, or a higher place there, then had I wherein I might rejoice besides the Lord.

Here ye see the nature of the law, and the nature of the evangelion. How the law is the key that binds and condemns all men, and the evangelion is the key that looses them again. The law goes before, and the evangelion follows. When a preacher preaches the law, he binds all consciences; and when he preaches the gospel, he looses them again. These two salves, I mean the law and the gospel, God and his preacher use to heal and cure sinners. The law drives out the disease and makes it appear, and is a sharp salve, and a fretting corrosive, and kills the dead flesh, and looses and draws the sores out by the roots, and all corruption. It pulls from a man the trust and confidence that he has in himself, and in his own works, merits, deservings, and ceremonies, and robs him of all his righteousness, and makes him poor. It kills him, sends him down to hell, and brings him to utter desperation, and prepares the way of the Lord, as it is written of John the Baptist. For it is not possible that Christ should come to a man, as long as he trusts in himself, or in any worldly thing, or has any righteousness of his own, or riches of holy works. Then comes the evangelion, a more gentle plaster, which supples and assuages the wounds of the conscience, and brings health. It brings the Spirit of God, which looses the bonds of Satan, and unites us to God and his will, through strong faith and fervent love, with bonds too strong for the devil, the world, or any creature to loose them. And the poor and wretched sinner feels such great mercy, love, and kindness in God, that he is sure in himself that it is not possible that God should forsake him, or withdraw his mercy and love from him. And he boldly cries out with Paul, saying, Who shall separate us from the love that God loves us withal? That is to say, What shall make me believe that God loves me not? Shall tribulation? anguish? persecution? Shall hunger? nakedness? Shall sword? Nay, I am sure that neither death nor life, neither angel, neither rule nor power, neither present things nor things to come, neither high nor low, neither any creature, is able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. In all such tribulations, a christian man perceives that God is his Father, and loveth him

even as he loved Christ when he shed his blood on the cross. Finally, as before, when I was bond to the devil and his will, I wrought all manner of evil and wickedness, not for hell's sake, which is the reward of sin, but because I was heir of hell by birth and bondage to the devil, I did evil. For I could do no otherwise; to do sin was my nature. Even so now, since I am united to God by Christ's blood, I do well, not for heaven's sake, which yet is the reward of well doing, but because I am heir of heaven by grace and Christ's purchasing, and have the Spirit of God, I do good freely, for so is my nature. As a good tree brings forth good fruit, and an evil tree evil fruit. By the fruits shall ye know what the tree is. A man's deeds declare what he is within, but make him neither good nor bad, though after we be created anew by the Spirit and doctrine of Christ, we always wax more perfect with working according to the doctrine, and not with blind works of our own imagining. We must first be evil ere we do evil, as a serpent is first poisonous ere he poison. We must be also good ere we do good, as the fire must be first hot, ere it heat another thing. Take an example—As those blind and deaf who were cured in the gospel, could not see nor hear till Christ had given them sight and hearing, and those sick could not do the deeds of a whole man till Christ had given them health; so can no man do good in his soul till Christ have loosed him out of the bonds of Satan, and have given him wherewith to do good; yea, and first have poured into him that same good thing which he showed forth afterwards on others. Whatsoever is our own, is sin. Whatsoever is above that, is Christ's gift, purchase, doing, and working. He bought it of his Father dearly with his blood, yea, with his most bitter death, and gave his life for it. Whatsoever good thing is in us, it is given us freely, without our deserving or merits, for Christ's blood's sake. That we desire to follow the will of God, is the gift of Christ's blood. That we now hate the devil's will, whereunto we were so fast locked, and could not but love it, is also the gift of Christ's blood, unto whom belongeth the praise and honour of our good deeds, and not unto us.

Our deeds do us three manners of service. First, they certify us that we are heirs of everlasting life. And that the Spirit of God, which is the earnest thereof, is in us, in that our hearts consent unto the law of God, and we have power in our members to do it, though imperfectly. And

secondly, we tame the flesh therewith, and kill the sin that remains yet in us, and wax daily more and more perfect in the Spirit therewith, and keep that the lusts choke not the word of God that is sown in us, nor quench the gifts and working of the Spirit, and that we lose not the Spirit again. And thirdly, we do our duty unto our neighbours therewith, and help their necessity unto our own comfort also, and draw all men unto the honouring and praising of God.

And whosoever excels in the gifts of grace, let the same think that they are given him, as much to do his brother service as for his own self, and as much for the love which God has to the weak as unto him unto whom God giveth such gifts. And he that withdraws aught that he hath from his neighbour's need, robs his neighbour, and is a thief. And he that is proud of the gifts of God, and thinks himself by reason of them better than his feeble neighbour, and not rather as the truth is, acknowledges himself a servant unto his poor neighbour by the reason of them, the same has Lucifer's spirit in him and not Christ's.

These things to know; first the law; how that it is natural, right, and equity, that we have but one God to put our hope and trust in; and him to love with all the heart, all the soul, and all our might and power, and neither to move heart nor hand but at his commandment, because he hath first created us of nought, and heaven and earth for our sakes. And afterwards when we had marred ourselves through sin, he forgave us, and created us again in the blood of his beloved Son.

And that we have the name of our one God in fear and reverence; and that we dishonour it not in swearing thereby about light trifles or vanity, or call it to record for the confirming of wickedness or falsehood, or aught that is to the dishonour of God, which is the breaking of his laws, or unto the hurt of our neighbour.

And inasmuch as he is our Lord and God, and we his double possession, by creation and redemption, and therefore ought, as I said, neither to move heart or hand without his commandment; it is right that we have needful holy days to come together and learn his will; both the law, which he will have us ruled by, and also the promises of mercy which he will have us trust unto; and to give God thanks together for his mercy, and to commit

our infirmities to him through our Saviour Jesus, and to reconcile ourselves unto him, and each to other, if aught be between brother and brother that requires it. And for this purpose and such like, as to visit the sick and needy, and redress peace and unity, were the holy days ordained only, and so far are they to be kept holy from all manner of works that may be conveniently spared for the time till this be done, and no further, but then lawfully to work.

And that it is right that we obey father and mother, master, lord, prince, and king, and all the ordinances of the world, bodily and ghostly, by which God rules us, and ministers freely his benefits unto us all. And that we love them for the benefits that we receive by them, and fear them for the power they have over us to punish us, if we trespass the law and good order. So far yet are the worldly powers or rulers to be obeyed only, as their commandments repugn not against the commandment of God, and then hold. Wherefore we must have God's commandment ever in our hearts, and by the higher law interpret the inferior; that we obey nothing against the belief of one God, or against the faith, hope, and trust that is in him only, or against the love of God, whereby we do or leave undone, all things for his sake, and that we do nothing for any man's commandment against the reverence of the name of God, to make it despised and the less feared and set by; and that we obey nothing to the hinderance of the knowledge of the blessed doctrine of God whose servant the holy day is.

Notwithstanding, though the rulers whom God has set over us command us against God, or do us open wrong, and oppress us with cruel tyranny, yet because they are in God's place we may not avenge ourselves, but by the process and order of God's law, and laws of man made by the authority of God's law, which is also God's law, ever by a higher power, and remitting the vengeance unto God, and in the mean season suffer until the hour be come.

And on the other side, to know that a man ought to love his neighbour equally and fully as well as himself, because his neighbour, be he ever so simple, is equally created of God, and as fully redeemed by the blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Out of which commandment of love spring these: Kill not thy neighbour; defile not

his wife; bear no false witness against him; and finally, not only do not these things in deed, but covet not in thine heart, his house, his wife, his man servant, maid servant, ox, ass, or whatsoever is his. So that these laws pertaining unto our neighbour, are not fulfilled in the sight of God save with love. He that loveth not his neighbour keepeth not this commandment, Defile not thy neighbour's wife, though he never touch her, or never see her, or think upon her. For the commandment is, Though thy neighbour's wife be ever so fair, and thou have ever so great opportunity given thee, and she content, or haply provoke thee as Potiphar's wife did Joseph, yet see thou love thy neighbour so well, that for the very love, thou cannot find in thine heart to do that wickedness. And even so he that trusts in any thing save in God only and in his Son Jesus Christ, keeps no commandment at all in the sight of God.

For he that hath trust in any creature, whether in heaven or in earth, save in God and his Son Jesus, can see no cause to love God with all his heart, &c. neither to abstain from dishonouring his name, nor to keep the holy day for the love of his doctrine, nor to obey lovingly the rulers of this world; nor any cause to love his neighbour as himself, and to abstain from hurting him, where he may get profit by him, and save himself harmless. And in like wise against this law, Love thy neighbour as thyself, I may obey no worldly power, to do aught at any man's commandment unto the hurt of my neighbour who has not deserved it, though he be a Turk.

And to know how contrary this law is unto our nature, and how it is damnation not to have this law written in our hearts, though we never commit the deeds; and how there is no other means to be saved from this condemnation, than through repentance toward the law, and faith in Christ's blood, which are the very inward baptism of our souls, and the washing and the dipping of our bodies in the water is the outward sign. The plunging of the body under the water, signifies that we repent and profess to fight against sin and lusts, and to kill them every day more and more, with the help of God, and our diligence in following the doctrine of Christ, and the leading of his Spirit, and that we believe to be washed from our natural damnation in which we are born, and from all the wrath of the law, and from all the infirmities and weaknesses that remain in us,

after we have given our consent unto the law, and yielded ourselves to be scholars thereof, and from all the imperfectness of all our deeds done with cold love, and from all actual sin which shall be in us, while we enforce the contrary and ever fight against it, and hope to sin no more. And thus, repentance and faith begin at our baptism and first professing the laws of God, and continue unto our lives' end, and grow as we grow in the Spirit. For the perfecter we are, the greater is our repentance, and the stronger our faith. And thus, as the Spirit and doctrine on God's part, and repentance and faith on our part, beget us anew in Christ; even so they make us grow, and wax perfect and save us unto the end, and never leave us until all sin be put off, and we are clean purified and full formed and fashioned after the similitude and likeness of the perfectness of our Saviour Jesus, whose gift all is.

And finally, to know that whatsoever good thing is in us, that same is the gift of grace, and therefore not of deserving, though many things be given of God, through our diligence in working his laws, and chastising our bodies, and in praying for them, and believing his promises, which else should not be given us; yet our working deserves not the gifts, any more than the diligence of a merchant in seeking a good ship, brings the goods safe to land, though such diligence now and then helps thereto. But when we believe in God, and then do all that is in our might, and do not tempt him, then is God true to abide by his promise, and to help us, and perform alone when our strength is past.

To know these things is to have all the scripture unlocked and opened before thee, so that if thou wilt go in and read, thou canst not but understand. And in these things to be ignorant, is to have all the scripture locked up, so that the more thou readest it, the blinder thou art; and the more contrariety thou findest in it, and the more tangled art thou therein, and canst nowhere go through. For if thou had a gloss in one place, in another it will not serve. And therefore because we never are taught the profession of our baptism, we remain always unlearned, as well the spiritualty for all their great clergy and high schools, as we say, as the lay people. And now because the lay and unlearned people are taught these first principles of our profession, therefore they read the scripture and understand and delight therein. And our great pillars

of holy church, who have nailed a veil of false glosses on Moses' face, to corrupt the true understanding of his law, cannot come in. And therefore they bark, and say that the scripture maketh heretics, and it is not possible for them to understand it in the English, because they themselves do not in Latin.* And of pure malice that they cannot have their will, they slay their brethren for their faith which they have in our Saviour, and therein utter their bloody wolfish tyranny, and what they are within, and whose disciples. Herewith, reader, be committed unto the grace of our Saviour Jesus, unto whom, and God our Father through him, be praise for ever and ever. Amen.

* Tindal notices in the quaint but expressive language of that day, the assertion of the papists that "the scripture maketh men heretics," in his exposition of the first epistle of John, as follows:

"Because their darkness cannot comprehend the light of scripture, as it is written, John i. The light shineth in darkness, but the darkness could not comprehend it, they turn it into blind riddles, and read it without understanding, as laymen do our lady's matins, or as it were Merlin's prophecies—their minds are ever upon their heresies. And when they come to a place that soundeth like, there they rest, and wring out wonderful expositions to establish their heresies withal, like the tale of the boy who would fain have eaten of the pasty of lampreys, but durst not until the bells seemed to sing unto him. 'Sit down Jack boy, and eat of the lampreys'—to stablish his wavering conscience! But is it not great blindness to say in the beginning of all together, that the whole scripture is false in the literal sense, and killeth the soul? To prove this their pestilent heresy, they abuse the text of Paul, saying, The letter killeth, because that text was become a riddle unto them, and they understood it not, when Paul, by this word 'letter,' understood the law given by Moses to condemn all consciences, and to rob them of all righteousness, to compel them unto the promises of mercy that are in Christ.

"Heresy springs not of the scripture, no more than darkness of the sun; but is a dark cloud that springs out of the blind hearts of hypocrites, and covers the face of the scripture, and blinds their eyes that they cannot behold the bright beams of the scripture." —*Works, Fo. Ed.* p. 388.

AN

EXPOSITION

UPON THE

FIFTH, SIXTH, AND SEVENTH CHAPTERS OF MATTHEW.

WHICH THREE CHAPTERS ARE THE KEY AND THE DOOR OF THE SCRIPTURE, AND THE RESTORING AGAIN OF MOSES' LAW, CORRUPT BY THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES. AND THE EXPOSITION IS THE RESTORING AGAIN OF CHRIST'S LAW CORRUPT BY THE PAPISTS.

THE PROLOGUE TO THE READER.

HERE hast thou, dear reader, an exposition upon the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of Matthew, wherein Christ, our spiritual Isaac, diggeth again the wells of Abraham; which wells the scribes and pharisees, those wicked and spiteful Philistines, had stopped and filled up with the earth of their false expositions. He opens the kingdom of heaven, which they had shut up that other men should not enter, as they themselves had no desire to go in. He restores the key of knowledge which they had taken away, and broken the wards with wresting the text contrary to its due and natural course with their false glosses. He plucks away from the face of Moses, the veil which the scribes and pharisees had spread thereon, that no man might perceive the brightness of his countenance. He weeds out the thorns and bushes of their pharisaical glosses, wherewith they had stopped up the narrow way and strait gate, that few could find them.

The wells of Abraham are the scripture. And the

scripture may well be called the kingdom of heaven, which is eternal life, and the knowledge of God the Father, and of his Son Jesus Christ. (John xvii.) Moses' face is the law in its right understanding; and the law in its right understanding is the key, or at the least, the first and principal key, to open the door of the scripture. And the law is the very way that brings unto the door Christ, as it is written Gal. iii. The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. And (Rom. x.) The end of the law, that is to say, the thing, or cause why the law was given, is Christ, to justify all that believe. That is to say: the law was given to prove us unrighteous, and to drive us to Christ, to be made righteous through forgiveness of sin by him. The law was given to make the sin known, saith St. Paul, (Rom. iv.) and that sin committed under the law might be the more sinful. (Rom. vii.) The law is that which Paul in his inward man granted to be good, but was yet compelled oftimes by his members, to do those things which that good law condemned for evil. Rom. vii.

The law makes no man to love the law, or less to do or commit sin; but it genders more desire, (Rom. vii.) and increases sin. (Rom. v.) For I cannot but hate the law, inasmuch as I find no power to do it, and it nevertheless condemns me because I do it not. The law sets us not at one with God, but causes wrath. Rom. iii.

The law was given by Moses, but grace and verity by Jesus Christ. (John i.) Behold, though Moses gave the law, yet he gave no man grace to do it or to understand it aright, or wrote it in any man's heart, to consent that it was good, and to wish after power to fulfil it. But Christ gives grace to do it, and to understand it aright, and writes it with his Holy Spirit in the tables of the hearts of men, and makes it a true thing there, and not hypocrisy.

The law, truly understood, is those fiery serpents that stung the children of Israel with present death. But Christ is the brazen serpent, on whom whosoever, being stung with conscience of sin, looketh with a sure faith, is healed immediately of that stinging, and saved from the pains and sorrows of hell.

It is one thing to condemn and pronounce the sentence of death, and to sting the conscience with fear of everlasting pain. And it is another thing to justify from sin; that is to say, to forgive and remit sin, and to heal the

conscience, and certify a man, not only that he is delivered from eternal death, but also that he is made the son of God, and heir to everlasting life. The first is the office of the law. The second pertaineth unto Christ only, through faith.

Now if thou give the law a false gloss, and say that the law is a thing which a man may do of his own strength, even out of the power of his free-will; and that by the deeds of the law, thou mayest deserve forgiveness of thy past sins; then died Christ in vain, (Gal. ii.) and is made almost of no stead, seeing thou art become thine own saviour. Neither can Christ, where that gloss is admitted, be otherwise taken or esteemed of christian men, for all his passion and promises made to us in his blood, than he is of the Turks; how that he was a holy prophet, and that he prays for us as other saints do; save that we christians think that he is somewhat more in favour than other saints be, though we imagine him so proud, that he will not hear us but through his mild mother and other holy saints, all of whom we count much more meek and merciful than he, but him most of might, and that he hath also a higher place in heaven, as the Grey Friars and Observants set him, as it were from the chin upward, above St. Francis.

And so when by this false interpretation of the law, Christ, which is the door, the way, and the ground, or foundation of all the scripture, is lost, concerning the chiefest fruit of his passion, and no more seen in his own likeness; then is the scripture locked up, and henceforth there is extreme darkness and a maze, wherein if thou walk, thou wottest neither where thou art, nor canst find any way out. It is a confused chaos, and a mingling of all things together without order, every thing contrary to another. It is a hedge or grove of briers, wherein if thou be caught, it is impossible to get out, but if thou loose thyself in one place, thou art tangled and caught in another for it.

Thus was the scripture locked up of the scribes and pharisees, that the Jews could not see Christ when he came, nor yet can they see him. And though Christ with these three chapters opened it again; yet by such glosses, for our unthankfulness' sake, that we had no desire to live according, have we christians lost Christ again, and the understanding of the most clear text, wherewith Christ expounds and restores the law again.

For the hypocrites, whatsoever seems impossible to their corrupt nature, unrenewed in Christ, they cover it over with the mist of their glosses, that the light thereof should not be seen. As they have interpreted here the words of Christ, wherewith he restores the law again, to be but good counsels only, but not precepts that bind the consciences.

And thereto they have so ruffled and tangled the temporal and spiritual regiment* together, and made thereof such confusion, that no man can know the one from the other; to the intent that they would seem to have both by the authority of Christ, who never usurped temporal regiment unto himself.

Notwithstanding, most dear reader, if thou read this exposition with a good heart, only to know the truth, for the amending chiefly of thine own living, and then of other men's, as charity requires where occasion is given, then shalt thou perceive their falsehood, and see their mist expelled with the brightness of the inevitable truth.

Another conclusion is this; all the good promises which are made us throughout all the scripture, for Christ's sake, for his love, his passion or suffering, his bloodshedding or death, are all made to us on this condition and covenant on our part, that we henceforth love the law of God, to walk therein, and to do it, and to fashion our lives thereafter. Insomuch that whosoever hath not the law of God written in his heart, that he love it, have his pleasure in it, and record† therein night and day, understanding it as God hath given it, and as Christ and the apostles expound it; the same hath no part in the promises, nor can have any true faith in the blood of Christ; because there is no promise made him, but to them only that promise to keep the law.

Thou wilt perhaps say to me again: If I cannot have my sins forgiven except I love the law, and of love endeavour myself to keep it; then the keeping of the law justifies me. I answer that the argument is false, and but blind sophistry, and like unto this argument—I cannot have forgiveness of my sin except I have sinned, therefore, to have sinned is the forgiveness of sins. And it is like to this also, no man can be healed of a disease but he that hath it; therefore, to have the disease doth heal the disease.

* Government, rule. † Call to mind, repeat.

And like sophistry are these arguments: If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments; (Matt. xix.) therefore, the deeds of the law justify us. Also, The hearers of the law are not righteous in the sight of God, but the doers of the law shall be justified; (Rom. ii.) therefore, the deeds of the law justify from sin. And again: We must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, to receive every man according to the deeds which he did in the body; therefore, the law, or the deeds of the law, justify.

These, and all such, are foolish arguments. For ye see that the king pardons no murderer but on condition, that he thenceforth keep the law, and do no more so; and yet ye know well enough that he is saved by grace, favour, and pardon, ere the keeping of the law come. Howbeit, if he break the law afterward, he falls again into the same danger of death.

Even so, none of us can be received to grace but upon a condition to keep the law, neither yet continue any longer in grace than that purpose lasts. And if we break the law, we must sue for a new pardon, and have a new fight against sin, hell, and desperation, ere we can come to a quiet faith again, and feel that the sin is forgiven. Neither can there be in thee a stable and an undoubted faith that thy sin is forgiven thee, except there also be a lusty courage in thine heart, and a trust that thou wilt sin no more, for on that condition that thou endeavour thyself to sin no more, is the promise of mercy and forgiveness made unto thee.

And as thy love to the law increases, so does thy faith in Christ, and so does thine hope and longing for the life to come. And as thy love is cold, so is thy faith weak, and thine hope and longing for the life to come little. And where no love to the law is, there is neither faith in Christ for the forgiveness of sin, nor longing for the life to come; but instead of faith, a wicked imagination that God is so unrighteous that he is not offended with sin. And instead of hope, a desire to live for ever here, and a greediness of worldly voluptuousness.

And unto all such is the scripture locked up, and made impossible to understand. They may read it, and rehearse the stories thereof, and dispute of it, as the Turks may, and as we may of the Turks' law. And they may suck pride, hypocrisy, and all manner of poison thereout, to

slay their own souls, and to put stumbling-blocks in other men's ways, to thrust them from the truth ; and get such learning therein as in Aristotle's ethics and moral philosophy, and in the precepts of old philosophers. But it is impossible for them to apply one sentence thereof to their soul's health, to fashion their lives thereby for to please God, or to make them love the law or understand it, either to feel the power of Christ's death, and the might of his resurrection, and the sweetness of the life to come. So that they ever remain carnal and fleshly, as thou hast an example of the scribes, pharisees, and Jews, in the new testament.

Another conclusion is this—Of them that believe in Christ for the remission of sin, and love the law, are a thousand degrees and more, one more perfect or weaker than another ; of which a great number are so feeble that they can neither go forward in their profession and purpose ; nor yet stand except they be holpen and borne of their stronger brethren, and tended as young children are by the care of their fathers and mothers. And therefore God commands the elder to care for the younger. As Paul teaches, (Rom. xv.) saying : We that be stronger, ought to bear the feebleness of the weaker. And, (Gal. vi.) Brethren, if any man be caught in any fault, ye that be spiritual and are grown in knowledge, and have gotten the victory of your flesh, teach such with the spirit of softness, not calling them heretics at the first moment, and threatening them with fire and fagots. But, bear each other's burden, and so shall ye fulfil the law of Christ. Even so verily shall ye fulfil the law of Christ, and not with smiting your brethren, and putting stumbling-blocks before their weak feet, and killing their consciences, and making them more afraid of shadows and vain terrors, than to break their Father's commandments, and to trust in words of wind and vanity, more than in their Father's promise.

And for their sakes, also, he has ordained rulers both spiritual and temporal, to teach them and exhort them ; to warn them and to keep occasions from them, that with custom of sin they fall not from their profession.

Now when they that take upon them to be the elder brethren, are become hypocrites, and are turned to wily foxes, and cruel wolves, and fierce lions, and the officers be waxen evil and servants to Mammon, ministering their

offices for their own lucre only, and not for the profit of their brethren, but favouring all vices whereby they may have an advantage; then is God compelled of his fatherly pity, himself to scourge his weak ones, with poverty, oppression, wrong, loss, danger, and with a thousand manner of diseases, to bring them again, if they be fallen, and to keep their hearts fast to their profession. So that those who love God, that is to say, the law of God, (for that is to love God,) unto them God turneth all to the best, and scourgeth them with the lusts of their own weakness to their own salvation.

Another conclusion is this—God receives both perfect and weak into the same grace, for Christ's sake; as a father receives all his children both small and great in like love. He receives them to be his sons, and makes a covenant with them, to bear their weakness for Christ's sake, till they be waxen stronger; and how often soever they fall, yet to forgive them if they will turn again; and never to cast off any, till he yield himself to sin, and take sin's part, and for affection and desire to sin, fight against his own profession to destroy it. And he corrects and chastises his children ever at home with the rod of mercy and love, to make them better; but he brings them not forth to be judged after the condemnation of the law.

Another conclusion is this—Every man is two men, flesh and spirit. Which so fight perpetually against one another, that a man must go either backward or forward, and cannot stand long in one state. If the spirit overcome the temptation; then is it stronger, and the flesh weaker. But, and if the flesh get a custom, then is the spirit none otherwise oppressed of the flesh, than as though she had a mountain upon her back, and as we sometime in our dreams think we bear heavier than a millstone on our breasts; or when we dream now and then that we would run away for fear, our legs seem heavier than lead. Even so is the spirit oppressed and overladen of the flesh through custom, that she struggleth and striveth to get up and break loose in vain, until the God of mercy who heareth her groan, through Jesus Christ, come and loose her with his power, and put his cross of tribulation on the back of the flesh to keep her down, to diminish her strength and to mortify her.

Wherefore every man must have his cross to nail his flesh to, for the mortifying of it. Now if thou be not

strong enough and discreet, to take up thy cross thyself, and to tame thy flesh with prayer and fasting, watching, deeds of mercy, holy meditations, and reading the scripture, and with bodily labour, and withdrawing all manner of pleasures from the flesh, and with exercises contrary to the vices which thou markest thy body to be most inclined to, and with abstaining from all that encourage the flesh against the spirit; as reading of wanton books, wanton communication, foolish jesting and effeminate thoughts, and talking of covetousness, which Paul forbids, Eph. v. and magnifying of worldly promotions; and takest up, I say, such a cross by thine ownself, or by the counsel of others that are better learned and exercised than thou; then must God put his cross of adversity upon thee. For we must have every man his cross in this world, or be damned with the world.

Of this ye see the difference between the sin of them that believe in the blood of Christ for the remission of sin, and consent and submit themselves unto the law: and the sin of them that yield themselves unto sin to serve it, &c. The first sin under grace, and their sins are venial, that is to say, forgivable. The other sin under the law, and under the condemnation of the law, and fight (a great part of them) against grace and against the Spirit of grace, and against the law of God and faith of Christ, and corrupt the text of the covenant with false glosses, and are disobedient to God, and therefore sin deadly.

Of this also ye see the difference between the lambs of true believers, and between the unclean swine that follow carnal lusts and fleshly liberty, and the churlish and hypocritish dogs, who, for the blind zeal of their own righteousness, persecute the righteousness of the faith in Christ's blood. The effeminate and careless swine which continue in their fleshliness, and cease not to wallow themselves in their old puddle, think that they believe very well in Christ's blood; but they are deceived, as thou mayest clearly perceive, because they fear not the damnation of evil works, nor love the law of good works, and therefore have no part in the promise.

The cruel and doggish hypocrites who take upon them to work, think that they love the law, which yet they never saw, save under a vail. But they are deceived, as thou mayest perceive, by that they believe not in Christ for the forgiveness of sin. Whereby also, I mean, that they

believe not, thou mayest perceive that they understand not the law. For if they understood the law, it would either drive them to Christ, or make them despair immediately.

But the true believers behold the law in its own likeness, and see the impossibility thereof to be fulfilled with natural power, and therefore flee to Christ for mercy, grace, and power; and then of a very thankfulness for the mercy received, love the law in its own likeness, and submit themselves to learn it and to profit therein, and to do to-morrow what they cannot do to-day.

Ye see also the difference of all manner of faiths. The faith of the true believers is, that God justifies or forgives, and Christ deserves it, and the faith or trust in Christ's blood receives it, and certifies the conscience thereof, and saves and delivers her from fear of death and damnation. And this is what we mean when we say, faith justifies; that faith (I mean in Christ and not in our own works) certifies the conscience that our sins are forgiven us for Christ's blood's sake.

But the faith of hypocrites is, that God forgives and works deserve it. And that same false faith in their own works receives the mercy promised to the merits of their own works; and so Christ is utterly excluded.

And thus ye see that faith is the thing that is affirmed to justify, of all parties. For faith in Christ's blood, which is God's promise, quiets the conscience of the true believers. And a false faith or trust in works, which is their own feigning, beguiles the blind hypocrites for a season, till God for the greatness of their sin, when it is full, opens their eyes, and then they despair. But the swine say, God is so good that he will save devils and all, and damn no man perpetually, whatsoever he do.

Another conclusion is this—To believe in Christ for the remission of sins, and of a thankfulness for that mercy to love the law truly: that is to say, to love God who is the Father of all and giveth all, and Jesus Christ who is Lord of us all, and bought us all, with all our hearts, souls, power, and might, and our brethren for our Father's sake, because they be created after his image, and for our Lord and Master Christ's sake, because they are the price of his blood; and to long for the life to come, because this life cannot be led without sin—these three points are the profession and religion of a christian man, and the inward baptism of the heart signified by the outward washing of

the body. And they are that spiritual character, badge, or sign, wherewith God, through his Spirit, marks all his immediately, and as soon as they are joined to Christ, and made members of his church by true faith.

The church of Christ, then, is the multitude of all them that believe in Christ for the remission of sin, and of thankfulness for that mercy, love the law of God purely and without glosses; and of hate which they have to the sin of this world, long for the life to come. This is the church that cannot err damnably, nor any long time, nor all of them; but as soon as any question arises, the truth of God's promise stirs up one or other, to teach them the truth of every thing needful to salvation, out of God's word, and lightens the hearts of the other true members to see the same, and to consent thereto.

And as all they that have their hearts washed with this inward baptism of the Spirit are of the church, and have the keys of the scripture; yea, and of binding and loosing, and do not err; even so they that sin of purpose, and will not hear when their faults be told them, but seek liberties and privileges to sin unpunished, and gloss out the law of God, and maintain ceremonies, traditions, and customs, to destroy the faith of Christ; the same be members of Satan, and all their doctrine is poison, error, and darkness; yea, though they be popes, bishops, abbots, curates, and doctors of divinity, and though they can rehearse all the scripture without book, and though they be learned in Greek, Hebrew, and Latin; yea, and though they so preach Christ and the passion of Christ, that they make the poor women weep and howl again. For when they come to the point that they should minister Christ's passion unto the salvation of our souls, there they poison altogether, and gloss out the law that should make us feel our salvation in Christ, and drive us in that point from Christ, and teach us to put our trust in our own works for the remission and satisfaction of our sins, and in the apish play of hypocrites who sell their merits instead of Christ's blood and passion.

Lo, now, dear reader, to believe in Christ's blood for the remission of sin, and purchasing of all the good promises that help to the life to come; and to love the law, and to long for the life to come, is the inward baptism of the soul, the baptism that only avails in the sight of God, the new generation and image of Christ, the only key also to bind

and loose sinners; the touchstone to try all doctrines; the lantern and light that scatters and expels the mist and darkness of all hypocrisy, and a preservative against all error and heresy; the mother of all good works; the earnest of everlasting life, and the title* whereby we challenge our inheritance.

And though faith in Christ's blood make the marriage between our soul and Christ, and is properly the marriage garment, yea, and the sign Thau, that defendeth us from the smiting and power of the evil angels,† and is also the rock whereon Christ's church is built, and whereon all that is built standeth against all weather of wind and tempests; yet might the profession of the faith in Christ's blood, and of the love to the law, and longing for the life to come, be called all these things, were malice and froward understanding away; because that where one of them is, there will be all three, and where all are not, there is none of them.

And because that the one is known by the other, it is impossible to know any of them truly, and not be deceived, but in respect and comparison of the other.

For if thou wilt be sure that thy faith is perfect, then examine thyself whether thou love the law. And in like manner, if thou wilt know whether thou love the law aright, then examine thyself whether thou believe in Christ only for the remission of sin, and for obtaining the promises made in the scripture. And even so compare thy hope of the life to come, unto faith and love, and to hating the sin of this life; which hate, the love to the law engenders in thee. And if they accompany not one another, all three together, then be sure that all is but hypocrisy.

If you say, Seeing faith, love, and hope are three inseparable virtues; therefore, faith only justifieth not. I answer, though they be inseparable yet they have separate and sundry offices, as it is already said of the law and faith. Faith only, which is a sure and an undoubted trust in Christ and in the Father through him, certifies the conscience that the sin is forgiven, and the damnation and impossibility of the law taken away, as it is above rehearsed in the conditions of the covenant. And with such persuasions, it mollifies the heart and makes it love God again and his law.

And as oft as we sin, faith only keeps that we forsake

* That which attests the possession.
† Ezekiel ix.

not our profession, and that love utterly quench not, and hope fail not, and alone makes the peace again. For a true believer trusts in Christ only, and not in his own works or aught else, for the remission of sin.

And the office of love is to pour out again the same goodness that she has received of God, upon her neighbour, and to be to him as she feels Christ to herself. The office of love only is to have compassion, and to bear with her neighbour the burden of his infirmities; and, as it is written 1 Pet. 4., covereth the multitude of sins. That is to say, considers the infirmities and interprets all to the best, and takes for no sin at all a thousand things, of which the least were enough, if a man loved not, to go to law for and to trouble and disquiet a whole town, and sometimes a whole realm or two.

And the office of hope is to comfort in adversity and to make patient, that we faint not, and fall down under the cross, or cast it off our backs. And thus ye see that these three, inseparable in this life, have yet separable and sundry offices and effects, as heat and drought being inseparable in the fire, have yet their separable operations. For the drought only expels the moistness of all that is consumed by fire, and heat only destroys the coldness. For drought and cold may stand together, and so may heat and moistness. It is not all one to say, the drought only, and the drought that is alone; nor all one to say, faith only, and faith that is alone.

Go to then, and desire God to print this profession in thine heart, and to increase it daily more and more, that thou mayest be fully shapen like unto the image of Christ in knowledge and love, and humble thyself, and creep low by the ground, and cleave fast to the rock of this profession, and tie to thy ship this anchor of faith in Christ's blood, with the cable of love, to cast it out against all tempests; and so set up thy sail, and get thee to the main sea of God's word. And read here the words of Christ with this exposition following, and thou shalt see the law, faith, and works, restored each to his right use and true meaning. And thereto the clear difference between the spiritual regiment and the temporal, and shalt have an entrance and open way into the rest of all the scripture. Wherein, and in all other things may the Spirit of verity guide thee, and thine understanding. Amen.

AN

EXPOSITION

UPON THE

FIFTH, SIXTH, AND SEVENTH CHAPTERS OF MATTHEW.

Being Christ's Sermon on the Mountain.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER OF MATTHEW.

When he saw the people, he went up into a mountain and sat him down, and his disciples came to him, and he opened his mouth and taught them, saying;

1. *Blessed be the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

Christ here, in his first sermon, begins to restore the law of the ten commandments unto its right understanding, against the scribes and pharisees who were hypocrites, false prophets, and false preachers; and had corrupted the scripture with the leaven of their glosses. And it is not without a great mystery that Christ begins his preaching at poverty in spirit, which is neither beggary, nor against the possessing of riches—but it is a virtue contrary to the vice of covetousness, the inordinate desire and love of riches, and putting trust in riches.

Riches are the gift of God, given to man to maintain the degrees of this world, and therefore are not evil; yea, and some must be poor and some rich, if we have an order in this world. And God our Father divides riches and poverty among his children according to his godly pleasure and wisdom. And as riches do not exclude thee from the blessing, so poverty does not certify thee; but to put thy trust in the living God, makes thee heir thereof. For if

thou trust in the living God, then if thou be poor, thou covetest not to be rich, for thou art certified that thy Father shall minister unto thee food and raiment, and be thy defender; and if thou have riches, thou knowest that they are but vanity, and that as thou broughtest them not into the world, so shalt thou not carry them out; and that as they are thine to day, so may they be another man's to-morrow; and that the favour of God alone both gave, and also keepeth thee and them, and not thy wisdom or power: and that neither they, nor ought else can help at need, save the good will of thy heavenly Father only. Happy and blessed then are the poor in spirit, that is to say, the rich, that have not their confidence or consolation in the vanity of their riches; and the poor, that desire not inordinately to be rich, but have their trust in the living God, for food and raiment, and for all that pertains either to the body or the soul; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

And contrariwise, unhappy and accursed, and that with the first and deepest of all curses, are the rich in spirit, that is to say, the covetous, who being rich, trust in their riches, or being poor, long for the consolation of riches; and comfort not their souls with the promises of their heavenly Father, confirmed with the blood of their Lord Christ. For unto them it is harder to enter into the kingdom of heaven, than for a camel to enter through the eye of a needle. (Mark x.) No, they have no part in the kingdom of Christ and God. (Eph. v.) Therefore is it evident why Christ so diligently warns all his to beware of covetousness, and why he admits none to be his disciples except he first forsake altogether. For there never was a covetous person true yet, either to God or man.

If a covetous man be chosen to preach God's word, he is a false prophet immediately. If he be of the lay sort, he joins himself unto the false prophets to persecute the truth. Covetousness is not only above all other lusts, those thorns that choke the word of God in them that possess it, but it is also a deadly enemy to all that interpret God's word truly. All other vices, though they laugh them to scorn that talk godly, yet they can suffer them to live and to dwell in the country; but covetousness cannot rest as long as there is one that cleaves to God's word in all the land.

Take heed to thy preacher therefore, and be sure, if he

be covetous and gape for promotion, that he is a false prophet, and leavens the scripture, notwithstanding all his crying, "Fathers, fathers," "holy church," and "fifteen hundred years," and for all his other holy pretences.

2. *Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.*

This mourning is also in the spirit, and no kin to the sour looking of hypocrites, nor to the impatient wayward-ness of those fleshly men who ever whine and complain that the world is nought, because they cannot obtain and enjoy their lusts therein. Neither forbids it always to be merry, and to laugh, and make good cheer now and then, to forget sorrow, that overmuch heaviness swallow not a man clean up. For the wise man saith, Sorrow hath cost many their lives.

And (Prov. xvii.) A heavy spirit drieth up the bones. And Paul commands (Phil. iv.) to rejoice ever. And (Rom. xii.) he saith, Rejoice with them that rejoice, and sorrow with them that sorrow, and weep with them that weep, which seem two contraries.

This mourning is that cross without which was never any disciple of Christ, nor ever shall be. For of whatsoever state or degree thou be in this world, if thou profess the gospel, there follows thee a cross, (as warmness accompanieth the sun shining,) under which thy spirit shall groan and mourn secretly, not only because the world and thine own flesh carry thee away direct contrary to the purpose of thine heart; but also to see and behold the wretchedness and misfortunes of thy brethren; for whom, because thou lovest them as well as thyself, thou shalt mourn and sorrow no less than for thyself. Though thou be king or emperor, yet if thou knowest Christ, and God through Christ, and intendest to walk in the sight of God, and to minister thine office truly, thou shalt, to keep justice with all, be compelled daily to do that which thou art no less loth to do, than if thou shouldest cut off arm, hand, or any other member of thine own body; yea, and if thou wilt follow the right way, and neither turn on the right hand nor on the left, thou shalt have immediately thine own subjects, thine own servants, thine own lords, thine own counsellors, and thine own prophets against thee. Unto whose froward malice and stubbornness, thou shalt be compelled to permit a thousand things against thy conscience, not being able to resist them, at which thine heart

shall bleed inwardly, and shalt sauce thy sweet sops, which the world supposes thou hast, with sorrows enough; and thou shalt still be mourning; studying either alone, or else with a few friends secretly night and day, and sighing to God for help to mitigate the furious frowardness of those whom thou art not able to withstand, that all go not after the will of the ungodly. What was David compelled to suffer all the days of his life, of his own servants the sons of Zeruiah, besides the mischances of his own children? And how was our king John forsaken of his own lords, when he would have put a good and godly reformation in his own land?* How was Henry the second compassed in like manner of his own prelates† whom he had promoted of nought, with the secret conspiracy of some of his own temporal lords with them? I spare to speak of the mourning of the true preachers, and the poor common people, who have none other help but the secret hand of God, and the word of his promise.

But they shall be comforted of all their tribulation, and their sorrow shall be turned into joy, and that infinite and everlasting in the life to come. Neither are they without comfort here in this world, for Christ hath promised to send them a Comforter to be with them for ever, the Spirit of truth, which the world knoweth not. (John xiv.) And they rejoice in hope of the comfort to come. Rom. xii.

And they overcome through faith, as it is written, Heb. xi. The saints through faith overcame kingdoms and obtained the promises. And 1 John v. This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. But the blind world neither sees our comfort nor our trust in God, nor how God, through faith in his word, helps us and makes us overcome.

How overcome they, wilt thou say, that are always persecuted and ever slain? Verily in every battle some of them that win the field be slain, yet they leave the victory unto their dear friends, for whose sakes they took the fight upon them, and therefore are conquerors, seeing they obtain their purpose, and maintain what they fought for. The accursed rich of this world who have their joy and comfort in their riches, have since the beginning fought against them, to weed them out of the world. But yet in vain. For though they have always slain some, yet those

* By lessening the tyranny of the popish ecclesiastics.

† Thomas à Becket and his supporters.

that were slain, won the victory for their brethren with death, and ever increased the number of them. And though they seemed to die in the sight of the foolish, yet they are in peace and have obtained that everlasting kingdom for which they fought. And besides all this, when God plagues the world for their sin, these that mourn and sorrow are marked with the sign of Thau in their foreheads, and saved from the plague, that they perish not with the wicked, as thou seest Ezekiel ix, and as Lot was delivered from among the people of Sodom.

And contrariwise, cursed are they that laugh now, that is to say, which have their joy, solace, and comfort in their riches, for they shall sorrow and weep. (Luke vi.) As it was answered the rich man, (Luke xvi.) Son, remember how that thou receivedst thy good days in thy lifetime, and Lazarus likewise evil; and now is he comforted and thou tormented.

3. *Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.*

By the earth, understand all that we possess in this world, all which God will keep for us, if we be soft and meek. And whatsoever trouble arise, yet, if we will be patient and abide, the end will go on our side; as it is written in the thirty-sixth psalm, The wicked shall be weeded out, but they that abide the Lord's leisure, shall inherit the earth. And again; Within a while the wicked shall be gone, thou shalt behold the place where he was, and he shall be away, but the meek shall inherit the earth. Even as we say, Be still and have thy will, and Of little meddling cometh much rest: for a patient man shall wear out all his enemies.

It is impossible to dwell in any place where no displeasure should be done thee. If it be done unwillingly, as when thy neighbour's beasts break into thy corn by some chance against his will, then it is reason that thou be soft and forgive. If it be done of malice and self-will, then with revenging thou dost but with pottering in the fire make the flame greater, and givest an occasion of more evil to be done thee. If any man rail on thee and rebuke thee, answer not again, and the heat of his malice shall die in itself, and go out immediately, as fire does when no more wood is laid thereon. If the wrong that is done be greater than thou art able to bear, trust in God and complain with all meekness unto the officer that is set of God to

forbid such violence. And if the gentlemen that dwell about thee be tyrants, be ready to help to fetch home their wood, to plough their land, to bring in their harvest, and so forth; and let thy wife visit my lady now and then with a couple of fat hens or a fat capon, and such like, and then thou shalt possess all the remnant in rest, or else one quarrel or other may be picked with thee, to make thee quit of all together.

Choose whether thou wilt with softness and suffering have God on thy side, ever to save thee, and to give thee ever enough, and to have a good conscience and peace on the earth; or with furiousness and impatience have God against thee, and be polled a little and a little of all together, and to have an evil conscience and never rest on earth, and to have thy days shortened thereto. God hath promised, if thou be meek and soft and suffer a little persecution, to give thee not only the life to come, but also an hundred fold here in this life; that is to say, to give thee his ownself, and to be thy protector, and minister to thee ever enough, which may of right be called an hundred fold, and is a treasure passing the treasure of all princes.

Finally, Christ teaches here how every man must live for himself among them to whom he is a neighbour, and in private matters in which he is but as a neighbour, though he be a king, and in which thou canst not be too soft. But, and if thou be an officer, then thou must be good, kind, and merciful, but not a milksop and negligent. And to whom thou art a father, them must thou rule, and make obedient, and that with sharpness, if softness will not be heard, and so in all other offices.

4. *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be full filled.*

Righteousness in this place is not taken for the principal righteousness of a christian man, through which the person is good and accepted before God. For these eight points are but doctrines of the fruits and works of a christian man, before which the faith must be there, to make righteous without all deserving of works, and as a tree out of which all such fruits and works must spring. Wherefore understand here the outward righteousness before the world, and true and faithful dealing each with other, and

just executing of the offices of all manner of degrees, and meek obedience of all that are under power. So that the meaning is; happy are they which not only do their duties to all men, but also study and help to the uttermost of their power with word, deed, counsel, and exhorting, that all others deal truly also, according to the degree that every man bears in the world, and be as desirous to further good order and righteous dealing, as the hungry and thirsty be desirous to eat and drink.

And note, that it is not for nothing that he saith, Hunger and thirst. For except thy soul hunger and thirst for this righteousness of her new nature, as the body doth for meat and drink of his old nature, the devil and the children of this world, who cannot suffer that a man either deal truly himself, or help others, will so resist thee, plague thee, and so weary thee, that thou hadst rather, of very mistrust and desperation that thy state should be better, to forsake all, and make thyself a monk or a friar; yea, and to run into a strange country, and leave all thy friends, than abide in the world, and let it choose whether it will sink or swim.

But to comfort us, that we faint not, or be weary of well doing, Christ promises that all who have this thirst and hunger, shall have their desire satisfied, and be translated into a kingdom, where is no unrighteousness; besides that thou shalt here at length see many come to the right way and help with thee, and many things that cannot be altogether mended, yet somewhat bettered and more tolerable; so that all righteousness shall not be quenched.

And contrariwise, Cursed be all they that are full, as Luke saith; that is to say, the hypocrites who, to avoid all labour, sorrow, care, cumbrance, and suffering with their brethren, get them to dens, to live at rest, and to fill their bellies, the welfare of other men not being regarded. No, it were a grief to them that others were better, that they alone may be taken for holy; and that whosoever will go to heaven, must buy it of them; yea, they are so full, that they prefer themselves before poor sinners, and look as narrowly on them as the pharisee did on the publican, thanking God that he alone was good, and the other evil. Cursed are they yet for all their fulness, for they shall hunger with everlasting hunger, where none shall give them to eat, nor they have any refreshing of their pains.

5. *Blessed be the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.*

To be merciful, is to have compassion and to feel another man's disease; and to mourn with them that mourn, and suffer with them that suffer; and to help and succour them that are in tribulation and adversity; and to comfort them with good counsel, and wholesome instruction, and loving words. And to be merciful, is lovingly to forgive them that offended thee, as soon as they acknowledge their misdoing and ask thee for mercy. To be merciful, is patiently long to abide the conversion of sinners, with a good courage, and hope that God will at the last convert them, and in the mean time to pray earnestly for them, and ever when he sees an occasion, to exhort them, warn them, admonish them, and rebuke them. And to be merciful, is to interpret all to the best, and to look through the fingers at many things, and not to make a grievous sin of every small trifle, and to suffer and forbear in his own cause the malice of them that will not repent nor acknowledge their wickedness, as long as he can suffer it, and as long as it ought to be suffered, and when he can no longer, then to complain to them that have authority to forbid wrong, and to punish such evil doers.

But the hypocrites, on the contrary, condemn all men for grievous sinners, save those only that buy their holiness of them. And because they will suffer with no man, they get them to silence. And because they will help no man, all that they have, say they, pertains unto the convent, and is none of theirs. And if they be offended, they will be avenged immediately. And to cloke, that they should not seem to avenge themselves, the matter, say they, pertains to God and holy church, or to some saint, or to one or other holy thing: as if thou should smite one of them on the one cheek, he would have turned to thee the other ere he would avenge himself; but the injury of the holy oil wherewith he was anointed, that must he avenge, and that with a spiritual punishment, that thou must be accursed as black as a collier, and delivered to Satan! And if thou come not in and ask absolution, and offer thyself to penance and to paying thereto, they will not suffer till the devil fetch thee, but will deliver thee to the fire in the mean time. And all for zeal of righteousness, say they.

Oh hypocrites! the zeal of righteousness is to hunger

and thirst for righteousness, as it is above described; that is, to care, and study, and to do the uttermost of thy power, that all things go in the right course and due order, both through all degrees of the temporalty and also of the spiritualty, and to jeopard life and goods thereon. All the world can bear record what pains ye take, and how ye care for the temporal commonwealth, that all degrees therein did, and had their duty; and how ye put your lives in adventure to preach the truth; and to inform lords and princes, and to cry upon them to fear God and to be learned, and to minister their offices truly unto their subjects, and to be merciful, and an example of virtue unto them! And how ye helped that youth were brought up in learning and virtue, and that the poor were provided for of food and raiment, &c.! And how ye provided that your priests be all learned, and preach, and do their duties truly, every man in his parish! How ye provide that sects arise not to poll the people and lead them out of the way, under a colour of long praying and hypocritish holiness, themselves living idle and being utterly unprofitable unto the commonwealth! Who smelleth not the sweet odour of chastity that is among you! What righteousness is in your sanctuaries, and what indifferent equity is in all your exemptions, privileges, and liberties! By your works we judge you and your zeal to righteousness, and not by your sophistical subtle reasons with which ye would claw our ears, blear our eyes, and beguile our wits, to take your tyrannous, covetous cruelty for the zeal of righteousness!

Finally, he that will not be merciful, to be blessed of God, and to obtain mercy of him both here, and in the life to come, let him be accursed with the unmerciful; and to him be judgment without mercy, according to the words of St. James, in the second chapter of his epistle.

6. *Blessed be the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*

That which enters into a man defiles not a man. But the things that defile a man, proceed first out of his heart, as thou mayest see Matthew xv. Thence come out evil thoughts, saith Christ, as murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, and blasphemies. These are the things that make a man foul. A man then is not foul in the sight of God, till his heart be foul. And the filthiness of the heart is thoughts that study to break God's

commandments. Wherefore the pureness of the heart is the consenting and studious purpose to keep the law of God, and to mean truly in all thy words and works, and to do them with a true intent.

It follows then that thou mayest be pure hearted, and therewith do all that God hath commanded or not forbidden. Thou mayest be pure hearted and have a wife and children; be a judge and condemn to death them that have deserved it; hang or behead evil doers, after they be by a just process condemned. Thou mayest be pure hearted, and do all the drudge in the world. Lot was pure hearted among the people of Sodom. Nicodemus being in the council, among them that conspired the death of Christ, was pure hearted, and consented not with them to the death of the innocent.

If the law be written in thine heart it will drive thee to Christ, which is the end of the law to justify all that believe. (Rom. x.) And Christ will show thee his Father. For no man seeth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will show him. (Luke x.) If thou believe in Christ that he is thy Saviour, that faith will lead thee in immediately, and show thee God with a lovely and amiable countenance, and make thee feel and see that he is thy Father, altogether merciful to thee, and at one with thee, and thou his son and highly in his favour and grace, and sure that thou pleasest him, when thou doest a hundred things which some holy people would suppose themselves defiled, if they should but think on them. And to see God is the blessing of a pure heart.

Impure and unclean hearted, then, are all they that study to break God's commandments. Impure hearted are all that believe not in Christ to be justified by him. Impure hearted are all hypocrites that do their work for a false purpose, either for praise, profit, or to be justified thereby; which painted sepulchres, as Christ calls them, can never see God, or be sure that they be in the state of grace, and that their works be accepted, because they have not God's word with them, but wholly against them.

7. *Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God.*

To inherit this blessing, it is not only required that thou have peace in thyself, and that thou take all to the best, and be not offended lightly and for every small trifle, and alway

ready to forgive, nor sow any discord, nor avenge thine own wrong; but also that thou be fervent and diligent to make peace, and to go between, where thou knowest or hearest malice and envy to be, or seest hate or strife to arise between person and person, and that thou leave nothing unsought, to set them at one.

And though Christ here speak not of the temporal sword, but teaches how every man shall live for himself toward his neighbour; yet a prince, if he will be God's child, must not only not give any cause of war, nor begin any; but also, though he have a just cause, suffer himself to be entreated, if he that gave the cause repent, and must also seek all ways of peace before he fight. Howbeit when all is sought, and nothing will help, then he ought, and is bound, to defend his land and subjects, and in so doing he is a peace-maker, as well as when he causes thieves and murderers to be punished for their evil doing, and breaking of the common peace of his land and subjects.

If thou have peace in thyself, and lovest the peace of thy brethren after this manner, so is God through Christ at peace with thee, and thou his beloved son and heir also.

Moreover, if the wrong done thee be greater than thou mayest bear: as when thou art a person not for thyself only; but in respect of others, in whatsoever worldly degree it be, and hast an office committed thee; then, when thou hast warned with all good manner him that did it, and none amendment will be had, keep peace in thine heart and love him still, and complain to them that are set to reform such things, and so art thou yet a peace-maker, and still the son of God. But if thou avenge thyself, or desirest more than that such wrongs be forbidden, thou sinnest against God, in taking the authority of God upon thee without his commandment. God is Father over all, and is, of right, judge over all his children, and to him only pertains all avenging. Whoso therefore without his commandment avenges either with heart or hand, the same casts himself into the hands of the sword, and loses the right of his cause.

And on the other side, cursed be the peace-breakers, pick-quarrels, whisperers, backbiters, sowers of discord, dispraisers of them that be good, to bring them out of favour, interpreters to evil of that which is done for a good purpose, finders of faults where none is, stirrers up of princes to battle and war; and above all, cursed be they that falsely

belie the true preachers of God's word, to bring them into hate, and to shed their blood wrongfully for hate of the truth; for all such are children of the devil.

8. *Blessed are they that suffer persecution for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

If the faith of Christ and the law of God, in which two all righteousness is contained, be written in thine heart; that is, if thou believe in Christ to be justified from sin, or for remission of sin, and consentest in thine heart to the law, that it is good, holy, and just, and thy duty to do it, and submittest thyself so to do; and thereupon goest forth, and testifiest that faith and law of righteousness openly unto the world, in word and deed; then will Satan stir up his members against thee, and thou shalt be persecuted on every side. But be of good comfort and faint not. Call to mind the saying of Paul (2 Tim. iii.) How all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution. Remember how all the prophets that went before thee, were so dealt with. (Luke vi.) Remember the examples of the apostles, and of Christ himself, and that the disciple is no better than his master, and that Christ admits no disciple who not only leaves not all, but also takes his cross. We are not called to a soft living, and to peace in this world; but unto peace of conscience in God our Father, through Jesus Christ, and to war in this world.

Moreover, comfort thyself with the hope of the blessing of the inheritance of heaven, there to be glorified with Christ, if thou here suffer with him. For if we be like Christ here in his passion, and bear his image in soul and body, and fight manfully, that Satan blot it not out, and suffer with Christ for bearing record to righteousness; then shall we be like him in glory. St. John saith, Yet appeareth not what we shall be, but we know that when he appeareth, we shall be like him. And Paul, (Phil. iii.) Our conversation is in heaven, whence we look for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile bodies, and make them like his glorious body.

It is a happy thing to suffer for righteousness' sake, but not for unrighteousness. For what praise is it, saith Peter, in the second of his first epistle, though ye suffer, when ye be buffetted for your offences? Wherefore in the fourth of the same he saith, See that none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evil doer, or a busy body

in other men's matters. Such suffering glorifies not God, nor art thou thereby heir of heaven. Beware therefore that thou deserve not that thou sufferest. But if thou do, then beware much more of them that would bear thee in hand, how that such suffering should be satisfaction of thy sins, and a deserving of heaven. No suffering for righteousness, though heaven be promised thereto, yet doth it not deserve heaven, nor yet make satisfaction for the sins before. Christ does both. But and if thou repent and believe in Christ for the remission of sin, and then confess, not only before God, but also openly before all that see thee suffer, how that thou hast deserved what thou sufferest, for breaking the good and righteous law of thy Father, and then takest thy punishment patiently, as a wholesome medicine to heal thy flesh that it sin no more, and to warn thy brethren that they fall not into like offence, as Moses teaches every where; then, as thy patience in suffering is pleasing in the sight of thy brethren which behold thee, pity thee, and suffer with thee in their hearts, even so is it in the sight of God, and it is to thee a sure token that thou hast true faith, and true repentance.

And as they are blessed who suffer for righteousness, even so are they accursed who run away, and let it be trodden under the feet, and will not suffer for the faith of their Lord, and the law of their fathers, nor stand by their neighbours in their just causes.

9. *Blessed are ye, when they revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil sayings against you for my sake, and yet lie. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven. Even so verily they persecuted the prophets that were before you.*

Here seest thou the uttermost which a christian man must look for. It is not enough to suffer for righteousness; but that no bitterness or poison be left out of thy cup, thou shalt be reviled and railed upon; and even when thou art condemned to death, then shalt thou be excommunicated and delivered to Satan, deprived of the fellowship of holy church, the company of the angels, and of thy part in Christ's blood; and shalt be cursed down to hell, defied, detested, and execrated with all the blasphemous railings that the poisonful heart of hypocrites can think or imagine; and shalt see before thy face when thou goest to thy death, that all the world is persuaded and brought in belief, that

thou hast said and done what thou never thoughtest, and that thou diest for that which thou art as guiltless of as the child that is unborn.*

Well, though iniquity so highly prevail, and the truth, for which thou diest, be so low kept under, and be not once known before the world, insomuch that it seemeth rather to be hindered by thy death than furthered, which is of all griefs the greatest, yet let not thine heart fail thee, neither despair, as though God had forsaken thee, or loved thee not. But comfort thyself with old examples, how God hath suffered all his old friends to be so entreated, and also his only and dear Son Jesus. Whose example, above all others, set before thine eyes, because thou art sure he was beloved above all others, that thou doubt not but thou art beloved also, and so much the more beloved, the more thou art like to the image of his example in suffering.

Did not the hypocrites watch him in all his sermons, to trap him in his own words? Was he not subtilely asked whether it were lawful to pay tribute to Cæsar? Were not all his words wrongly reported? Were not his miracles ascribed to Beelzebub? Said they not he was a Samaritan, and had a devil in him? Was he not called a breaker of the sabbath, a wine drinker, a friend of publicans and sinners? Did he aught wherewith no fault was found, and that was not interpreted to be done for an evil purpose? Was not the pretence of his death, the destroying of the temple, alleged to bring him into the hate of all men? Was he not thereto accused of treason, that he forbad to pay tribute to Cæsar, and that he moved the people to insurrection? Railed they not on him in the bitterest of all his sufferings, as he hanged on the cross, saying, Save thyself, thou that savest others; come down from the cross, and we will believe in thee; fie, wretch, that destroyest the temple of God.

Yet he was beloved of God, and so art thou. His cause came to light also, and so shall thine at the last; yea, and thy reward is great in heaven with him, for thy deep suffering.

And on the other side, as they be cursed which leave righteousness destitute, and will not suffer therewith; so are they most accursed which know the truth, and yet not

* This picture of the sufferings of the martyrs in those days was drawn from what really took place. Tindal himself endured these bitter trials.

only flee therefrom because they will not suffer, but also for lucre become the most cruel enemies thereof, and most subtle persecutors, and most falsely lie thereon also.

Finally, though God when he promises to bless our works, binds us to work if we will obtain the blessing or promise; yet must we beware of this pharisaical pestilence, to think that our works deserve the promises. For whatsoever God commands us to do, that it is our duty to do, though there were no such promise made to us at all. The promise therefore cometh not of the deserving of the worker, as though God had need of aught that we could do, but of the pure mercy of God, to make us the more willing to do that which is our duty, &c. For if when we had done all that God commands us to do, he then gave us up into the hands of tyrants, and killed us, and sent us to purgatory, which men so greatly fear, or to hell, and all the angels of heaven with us, he did us no wrong, nor were unrighteous, for aught that we or they could challenge of deserving; howsoever God uses his creatures, he ever abideth righteous, till thou canst prove that after he hath bound himself with his own word of mercy, he then breaks promise with them that keep covenant with him. So now, if nought were promised, nought could we challenge, whatsoever we did. And therefore the promise comes of the goodness of the Promiser only, and not of the deserving of those works, of which God hath no need, and which were no less our duty to do, though there were no such promise.

10. *Ye be the salt of the earth: but if the salt be waxen unsavoury, what can be salted therewith? It is henceforth nothing worth; but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.*

The office of an apostle and true preacher is to salt, not only the corrupt manners and conversation of earthly people, but also the rotten heart within, and all that springs out thereof; their natural reason, their will, their understanding and wisdom; yea, and their faith and belief, and all that they have imagined without God's word, concerning righteousness, justifying, satisfaction, and serving of God. And the nature of salt is to bite, fret, and make smart. And the sick patients of the world, are marvellously impatient, so that though with great pain they can suffer their gross sins to be rebuked under a fashion, as in a parable

afar off; yet, to have their righteousness, their holiness, and serving of God and his saints, disallowed, impugned, and condemned for damnable and devilish, that may they not abide. Insomuch that thou must leave thy salting or else be prepared to suffer again; even to be called a railer, seditious, a maker of discord, and a troubler of the common peace; yea, a schismatic, and a heretic also; and to be lied upon, that thou hast done and said that which thou never thoughtest, and then to be called into judgment, and forced to sing a new song, and forswear salting, or else to be sent after thy fellows that are gone before, and the way thy Master went.

True preaching is a salting that stirs up persecution, and an office that no man is meet for, save he that is seasoned himself before with poverty in spirit, softness, meekness, patience, mercifulness, pureness of heart, and hunger of righteousness, and looking for persecution also: and has all his hope, comfort, and solace, in the blessing only, and in no worldly thing.

Nay will some say, a man might preach long enough without persecution, yea, and get favour too, if he would not meddle with the pope, bishops, prelates, and holy ghostly people that live in contemplation and solitariness, nor with great men of the world. I answer, true preaching is salting, and all that is corrupt must be salted. And those persons are of all others most corrupt, and therefore may not be left untouched.

The pope's pardons must be rebuked, the abuse of the mass, of the sacraments, and of all the ceremonies must be rebuked and salted. And selling of merits and of prayers must be salted. The abuse of fasting and of pilgrimage must be salted. All idolatry and false faith must be rebuked. And those friars that teach men to believe in St. Francis's coat, how that they shall never come in hell or purgatory, if they be buried therein, may not be passed over with silence.*

The pain and grief of salting made monks flee to their cloister. Nay, say they, we went thither of pure devotion to pray for the people. Yea, but for all that, the more ye increase, and the more ye multiply your prayers, the worse

* Many papists have been buried in the cast-off worn-out garments of monks, from a belief that they should thereby be preserved from the power of the devil, and considerable sums were often paid for this privilege.

the world is. That is not our fault, say they, but theirs, that they dispose not themselves, but continue in sin, and so are unapt to receive the influence of our prayers. Oh! hypocrites, if ye were true salt, and had good hearts, and loved your neighbours, (if dead men be neighbours to them that are alive,) and would come out of your dens and take pains to salt and season them, ye should make a great many of them so apt, that your prayers might take effect. But now, seeing, as ye say, they be so unsavoury that your prayers are unprofitable to them, though their goods are profitable to you, and ye have no compassion to come out and salt them, it is manifest that ye love not them, but theirs; and that ye pray not for them, but, under the colour of praying, mock them and rob them.

Finally, salt, which is the true understanding of the law, of faith, and of the intent of all works, has in you lost her virtue, neither be there any so unsavoury in the world as ye are, nor any that so sorely kick against true salting as ye do; and therefore are ye to be cast out and trodden under foot and despised of all men, by the righteous judgment of God.

If salt have lost its saltness, it is good for nothing but to be trodden under foot of men. That is, if the preacher, who for his doctrine is called salt, have lost the nature of salt, that is to say, his sharpness in rebuking all unrighteousness, all natural reason, natural wit, and understanding; and all trust and confidence in whatsoever it be, save in the blood of Christ; he is condemned of God, and disallowed of all them that cleave to the truth. In what case stand they then that have benefices and preach not? verily though they stand at the altar, yet are they excommunicate and cast out of the living church of almighty God.

And what if the doctrine be not true salt? verily then is it to be trodden under foot. As must all unsavoury ceremonies which have lost their significations, and not only teach not, and are become unprofitable and do no more service to man; but also have obtained authority as God in the heart of man, so that man serves them, and puts in them the trust and confidence that he should put in God his Maker, through Jesus Christ his Redeemer. Are the institutions of man better than God's? Yea, are God's ordinances better now than in the old time? The prophets trod under foot, and defiled the temple of God, and the

sacrifices of God, and all ceremonies that God had ordained, with fastings and prayings, and all that the people perverted and committed idolatry with. We have as strait a commandment to salt and rebuke all ungodliness as had the prophets. Will they then have their ceremonies honourably spoken of? then let them restore them to the right use, and put the salt of the true meaning and significations of them to them again. But as they now are used, none that loveth Christ can speak honourably of them. What true christian man can give honour to them that take all honour from Christ? Who can give honour to that which slays the soul of his brother, and robs his heart of that trust and confidence which he should give to his Lord that hath bought him with his blood?

11. *Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and so giveth it light to all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and praise your Father that is in heaven.*

Christ goes on and describes the office of an apostle and true preacher by another likeness; as he before called them the salt of the earth, even so here he calls them the light of the world: signifying thereby that all the doctrine, all the wisdom, and high knowledge of the world; whether it were philosophy of natural conclusions, of manners and virtue, or of laws of righteousness; whether it were of the holy scripture and of God himself, was yet but darkness, until the doctrine of his apostles came. That is to say, until the knowledge of Christ came, how that he is the sacrifice for our sins, our satisfaction, our peace, atonement, and redemption, our life thereto and resurrection. Whatsoever holiness, wisdom, virtue, perfectness, or righteousness, is in the world among men, howsoever perfect and holy they appear, yet all is damnable darkness, except the right knowledge of Christ's blood be there first, to justify the heart before all other holiness.

Another conclusion: As a city built on a hill cannot be hid, no more can the light of Christ's gospel. Let the world rage as much as it will, yet it will shine on their sore eyes whether they be content or no

Another conclusion: As men light not a candle to

whelm it under a bushel, but to put it on a candlestick to light all that are in the house, even so the light of Christ's gospel may not be hid nor made a separate thing, as though it pertained to some certain holy persons only. Nay, it is the light of the whole world, and pertains to all men, and therefore may not be made separate. It is a madness that divers men say, the lay people may not know it, except they can prove that the lay people be not of the world. Moreover it will not be hid, but as the lightning, that breaks out of the clouds, shines over all, even so doth the gospel of Christ. For where it is truly received, there it purifies the heart, and makes the person to consent to the laws of God, and to begin a new and a godly living, fashioned after God's laws, and without all dissimulation. And then it will kindle so great love in him toward his neighbour, that he shall not only have compassion on him in his bodily adversity, but much more pity him as to the blindness of his soul, and minister to him Christ's gospel. Wherefore if they say, It is here or there, in St. Francis's coat, or Dominic's, and such like, and if thou wilt put on that coat thou shalt find it there, it is false. For if it were there, thou shouldest see it shine abroad, though thou creepest not into a cell or a monk's cowl, as thou seest the lightning without creeping into the clouds; yea, their light would so shine that men should not only see the light of the gospel, but also their good works, which would come out as fast as they now run in. Insomuch that thou shouldest see them make themselves poor to help others, as they now make others poor to make themselves rich.

This light and salt pertained not then to the apostles, and now to our bishops and spiritualty, only. No, it pertains to the temporal men also. For all kings and all rulers are bound to be salt and light, not only in example of living, but also in teaching of doctrine unto their subjects, as well as they are bound to punish evil doers. Does not the scripture testify that king David was chosen to be a shepherd, and to feed his people with God's word? It is an evil schoolmaster that can only beat; but it is a good schoolmaster who so teaches, that few need to be beaten. This salt and light therefore pertain to the temporalty also, and that to every member of Christ's church; so that every man ought to be salt and light to others.

Every man then may be a common preacher,* thou wilt say, and preach every where by his own authority. Nay, verily: no man may yet be a common preacher save he that is called and chosen thereto by the common ordinance of the congregation, as long as the preacher teaches the true word of God. But every private man ought to be both light and salt to his neighbour, in virtuous living; insomuch that the poorest ought to strive to overrun the bishop, and preach to him in example of living. Moreover, every man ought to preach in word and deed unto his household, and to them that are under his governance, &c. And though no man may preach openly, save he that has the office committed unto him, yet ought every man to endeavour himself to be as well learned as the preacher, as nigh as it is possible. And every man may privately inform his neighbour, yea, and the preacher and bishop too, if need be. For if the preacher preach wrong, then may any man, whatsoever he be, rebuke him, first privately, and then, if that help not, complain farther. And when all is proved, according to the order of charity, and yet no amendment had; then every man that can, ought to resist him, and to stand by Christ's doctrine, and to jeopard life, and all for it. Look on the old examples, and they shall teach thee.

The gospel hath another freedom than the temporal regiment. Though every man's body and goods be under the king, do he right or wrong, yet the authority of God's word is free and above the king; so that the worst in the realm may tell the king, if he do him wrong, that he doth naught, and otherwise than God hath commanded him, and so warn him to avoid the wrath of God, who is the patient avenger of all unrighteousness. May I then, and ought I also, to resist father and mother and all temporal power, with God's word, when they wrongfully do or command that which hurts or kills the body; and have I no power to resist the bishop or preacher, who with false doctrine slays the souls, for which my Master and Lord Christ hath shed his blood? Are we otherwise under our bishops than Christ and his apostles, and all the other prophets were under the bishops of the old law? Nay, verily: and therefore may we, and also ought we to do as they did, and to answer as the apostles did. (Acts v.) We must rather obey God than men. In the gospel, every man is Christ's

* Public minister.

disciple, and a person for himself, to defend Christ's doctrine in his own person. The faith of the bishop will not help me, nor is the bishop's keeping the law sufficient for me. But I must believe in Christ for the remission of all sin, for mine ownself, and in mine own person. No more is the bishop's or the preacher's defending God's word enough for me. But I must defend it in mine own person, and jeopard life and all thereon, when I see need and occasion.

I am bound to get worldly substance for myself and for mine household with my just labour, and somewhat more for them that cannot, to save my neighbour's body. And am I not more bound to labour for God's word, to have thereof in store, to save my neighbour's soul? And when is it so much time to resist with God's word and to help, as when they which are believed to minister the true word, do slay the soul with false doctrine, for covetousness' sake? He that is not ready to give his life for the maintenance of Christ's doctrine against hypocrites, with whatsoever name or title they be disguised, the same is not worthy of Christ, nor can be Christ's disciple, by the very words and testimony of Christ. Nevertheless we must use wisdom, patience, meekness, and a discreet process, after the due order of charity, in our defending the word of God, lest, while we go about to amend our prelates, we make them worse. But when we have proved all that charity requires of us, and yet in vain; then we must come forth openly, and rebuke their wickedness in the face of the world, and jeopard life, and all thereon.

12. *Ye shall not think that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: no, I am not come to destroy them, but to fulfil them. For truly I say unto you, till heaven and earth perish, there shall not one jot or one tittle of the law escape till all be fulfilled.*

A little before, Christ calls his disciples the light of the world, and the salt of the earth, and that because of their doctrine, wherewith they should lighten the blind understanding of man, and with true knowledge drive out the false opinions and sophistical persuasions of natural reason, and deliver the scripture out of the captivity of false glosses which the hypocritical pharisees had patched thereto, and so kept it out of the light of true knowledge;

to stir up a new living, and to salt and season the corrupt manners of the old blind conversation. For where false doctrine, corrupt opinions, and sophistical glosses, reign in the understanding, there is the living devilish in the sight of God, howsoever it appear in the sight of the blind world. And on the other side, where the doctrine is true and perfect, of necessity there follows godly living. For out of the inward belief of the heart, flows the outward conversation of the members. He that believes that he ought to love his enemy, will never cease fighting against his ownself, till he have weeded all rancour and malice out of his heart. But he that believes it not, will put a visor of hypocrisy on his face, till he get opportunity to avenge himself.

And here he begins to teach them to be that light, and that salt of which he spake, and saith: Though the scribes and pharisees bear the people in hand, that all I do is of the devil, and accuse me of breaking the law and the prophets, as afterwards they railed on the apostles, that they drave the people from good works, through preaching the justifying and righteousness of faith, yet see that ye, my disciples, be not of that belief. For heaven and earth shall sooner perish, than one jot or tittle of the law should be put out. I come not to destroy the law, but to repair it only, and to make it go upright where it halteth: and even to make crooked straight, and rough smooth, as John the Baptist doth in the wilderness, and to teach the true understanding of the law. Without me the law cannot be fulfilled, nor ever could be. For though the law were given by Moses, yet grace and verity, that is to say, the true understanding and power to love it, and of love to fulfil it, comes, and ever came, through faith in me.

I do but wipe away the filthy and rotten glosses wherewith the scribes and the pharisees have smeared the law and the prophets, and rebuke their damnable living; which they have fashioned, not after the law of God, but after their own sophistical glosses, feigned to mock out the law of God, and to beguile the whole world, and to lead them in blindness. And the scribes and pharisees falsely belie me, how that I go about to destroy the law, and to set the people at a fleshly liberty, and to make them first disobedient, and to despise their spiritual prelates, and then to rise against the temporal rulers, and to

make all common, and to give license to sin unpunished; but this comes only of pure malice, hate, envy, and furious impatience, that their visors are plucked from their faces, and their hypocrisy discovered. Howbeit what I teach, and what my learning is, concerning the law, ye shall shortly hear, and that in few words.

13. *Whosoever breaketh one of these least commandments and teacheth men so, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven. But he that doth them and teacheth them, the same shall be great in the kingdom of heaven.*

Whosoever studies to destroy one of the commandments following, which are yet the least, and but childish things in respect of the perfect doctrine that shall hereafter be showed, and of the mysteries yet hid in Christ; and shall teach other men even so, in word or example, whether openly, or under a colour, and through false glosses of hypocrisy; that same teacher shall all they of the kingdom of heaven abhor and despise, and cast him out of their company, as a seething pot casts up her foam and scum and purges itself. So fast shall they of the kingdom of heaven cleave unto the pure law of God, without all men's glosses.

But whosoever shall first fulfil them himself, and then teach others, and set all his study to the furtherance and maintaining of them, that teacher shall all they of the kingdom of heaven have in price, and follow him and seek him out, as an eagle her prey, and cleave to him as burrs. For when the draff of the pharisees' glosses is cleansed out, these commandments are but the very law of Moses interpreted according to the pure word of God, and as the open text compels to understand them, if ye look diligently thereon.

The kingdom of heaven, take for the congregation or church of Christ. And to be of the kingdom of heaven, is to know God for our Father, and Christ for our Lord and Saviour from all sin. And to enter into this kingdom is impossible, except the heart of men be to keep the commandments of God purely, as it is written, John vii. If any man will obey his will, that is to say, the will of the Father that sent me, saith Christ, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of mine own head. For if thine heart be to do the will of God, which is his commandments; he will give thee a

pure eye, both to discern the true doctrine from the false, and the true doctor from the howling hypocrite. And therefore he saith,

14. *For I say unto you, except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.*

The righteousness of the scribes and pharisees cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. The kingdom of heaven is the true knowledge of God and Christ; therefore, the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees neither knows God nor Christ. He that is willing to obey the will of God understands the doctrine of Christ, as it is proved above; the scribes and the pharisees understand not the doctrine of Christ; therefore they have no will nor desire to obey the will of God. To obey the will of God is to seek the glory of God, for the glory of a master is the meek obedience of his servants; the glory of a prince is the humble obedience of his subjects; the glory of a husband is the chaste obedience of his wife; the glory of a father is the loving obedience of his children: but the scribes and the pharisees have no desire to obey the will of God, therefore, they seek not the glory of God. Furthermore, the scribes and the pharisees seek their own glory; they that seek their own glory preach their own doctrine; therefore the scribes and the pharisees preach their own doctrine. The major thou hast Matthew xxiii. The scribes and the pharisees do all their works to be seen of men: they love to sit uppermost at feasts, and to have the chief seats in the synagogues, and salutations in the open markets, and to be called Rabbi. And the minor follows the text above rehearsed, (John vii.) he that speaks of himself or of his own head, seeks his own glory: that is to say, he that preaches his own doctrine is ever known by seeking his own glory; so that is a general rule to know that a man preaches his own doctrine, if he seek his own glory.

Some man haply will say: The scribes and pharisees had no other law than Moses' and the prophets, nor any other scripture; and grounded their sayings thereon. That is truth: how then preached they their own doctrine? verily it follows in the said seventh of John. He that seeks the glory of Him that sent him, the same is true and there is no unrighteousness in him; that is to say, he will

do his Master's message truly, and not alter it. Where contrariwise he that seeks his own glory, will be false, when he is sent, and will alter his Master's message, to turn his Master's glory unto his ownself. Even so did the scribes and pharisees alter the word of God for their own profit and glory. And when God's word is altered with false glosses, it is no more God's word. As when God saith, Love thy neighbour, and thou puttest to thy leaven and sayest: If my neighbour do me no hurt, nor say me any, I am bound to love him, but not to give him at his need my goods which I have gotten with my sore labour. Now this is thy law and not God's. God's law is pure and single, Love thy neighbour whether he be good or bad. And by love, God means to help at need. Now when God bids thee to get thy living, and somewhat over to help him that cannot, or at a time hath not wherewith to help himself; if thou and thirty or forty with thee get you to a wilderness, and not only help not your neighbours, but also rob a great number of two or three thousand pounds yearly, how love ye your neighbours? Such men help the world with prayer, thou wilt say to me. Thou wert better to say, they rob the world with their hypocrisy, say I to thee, and it is truth in deed that they so do.* For if I stick up to the middle in the mire, like to perish without present help, and thou stand by and wilt not succour me, but kneelest down and prayest, will God hear the prayers of such a hypocrite? God bids thee so to love me, that thou put thyself in jeopardy to help me, and that thine heart, while thy body labours, do pray and trust in God that he will assist thee, and through thee save me. A hypocrite that will put neither body nor goods in peril to help me at my need, loves me not, neither hath compassion on me, and therefore his heart cannot pray, though he wag his lips ever so much. It is written John ix. If a man be a worshipper of God, and do his will, which is the true worship, him God heareth. Now the will of God is, that we love one another to help at need. And such lovers he heareth, and not subtle hypocrites. As love makes thee help me at my need; so when it is past thy power to help, it makes thee pray to God. Even so where is no love to make thee take bodily pain with me, there is no love that makes thee pray for me. But thy prayer is indeed for thy belly which thou lovest.

* The prayer of monks robbeth, and helpeth not.

What were the scribes and pharisees? The scribes besides that they were pharisees, as I suppose, were also officers, as our bishops, chancellors, commissaries, archdeacons, and officials. And the pharisees were religious men, which had professed, not as now, one Dominic, the other Francis, another Bernard's rules, but even to hold the very law of God, with prayer, fasting, and alms-deeds; and were the flower and perfection of all the Jews: as St. Paul rejoices of himself (Phil. iii.) saying, I was an Hebrew, and concerning the law, a pharisee, and concerning the righteousness of the law, I was faultless. They were more honourable than any sect of the monks with us, whether Observant, or Ancre,* or whatsoever other be had in price.

These might much better have rejoiced to have been the true church, and to have had the Spirit of God, and that they could not have erred, than they whom all the world sees neither keep God's laws nor man's, nor yet that devil's law of their own making. For God had made them of the old testament as great promises that he would be their God, and that his Spirit and all grace should be with them if they kept his laws, as he hath made to us. Now seeing they kept the uttermost jot of the law in the sight of the world, and were faultless; and seeing thereto that God has promised neither us nor them aught at all, but upon the profession of keeping his laws; which were more likely to be the right church, and to be taught of the Spirit of God so that they could not err, those pharisees or ours? Might not the general councils of those, and the things there decreed without scripture, seem to be of as great authority as the general councils of ours, and the things there ordained and decreed, both wholly without, and also against God's word? Might not the ceremonies which those had added to the ceremonies of Moses, seem to be as holy and as well to please God, as the ceremonies of ours? The things which they added to the ceremonies of Moses were of the same kind as those ceremonies were, and no more to be rebuked than the ceremonies of Moses. As for an example, if Moses had washed a table or dish, when an unclean worm had crept thereon, the pharisees washed the table with a wet clout before every refection, least any unclean thing had touched them

* Observants, a branch of the order of Franciscans; Anchorites, monks or nuns who led solitary lives, in secluded places.

unawares to all men; as we put unto our tithes a mortuary for all forgotten tithes.* What was then the wickedness of the pharisees? Verily the leaven of their glosses to the moral laws, by which they corrupted the commandments, and made them no more God's; and their false faith in the ceremonies that the bare work was a sacrifice and a service to God, the significations being lost; and the opinion of false righteousness in their prayers, fastings, and alms-deeds, that such works did justify a man before God, and not that God forgives sin of his mere mercy, if a man believe, repent, and promise to do his uttermost to sin no more.

When these thus sat in the hearts of the people, with the opinion of virtue, holiness, and righteousness, and that their law was the law of God; that their works were works commanded by God, and confirmed by all his prophets, as prayer, fasting, and alms-deeds, and that they were looked upon as the church of God that could not err; and finally, they themselves either every where were the chief rulers, or so sat in the hearts of the rulers, that their word was believed to be the word of God. What else could it be, to preach against all such, and to condemn their righteousness for the most damnable sin that can be, than to seem to go about to destroy the law and the prophets? What other thing can such a preacher seem to be before the blind world, than a heretic, schismatic, seditious, possessed with the devil, and worthy of shame most vile, and death most cruel; and yet these must be first rebuked, and their false righteousness detected, ere thou mayest preach against open sinners.

Or else if thou shouldest convert an open sinner from his evil living, thou shouldest make him nine hundred times worse than before. For he would at once be one of these sorts, even an Observant, or of some like sect, of which, among a hundred thousand, thou shalt never bring one to believe in Christ. Whereas among open sinners

* A mortuary was a gift left by persons at their death, or paid out of their property, to the parish priest (of the Romish church,) as a compensation for tithes which they might have forgotten to pay during their lifetime. It was sometimes claimed on the death of other individuals in a family, and for refusing to pay a mortuary on the death of an infant child, only five weeks old, Richard Hunn, a respectable citizen of London, in 1514, was imprisoned in the Lollard's tower, and murdered there by Dr. Horsey, chancellor to the bishop of London, and other Romanists.—See Hollinshed and Fox.

many believe at the hour of death, fall flat upon Christ, and believe in him only, without all other righteousness. It were a hundred thousand times better never to pray, than to pray such lip prayers; and never to fast or do alms, than to fast, and to do alms with a mind thereby to be made righteous, and to make satisfaction for former sins.

15. *Ye have heard how that it was said to them of old time, Kill not, for whosoever killeth shall be in danger of judgment. But I say unto you, whosoever is angry with his brother shall be in danger of judgment. And whosoever saith unto his brother, Racha, shall be in danger of a council. But whosoever saith to his brother, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.*

Here Christ begins, not to destroy the law, as the pharisees had falsely accused him, but to restore it again to he right understanding, and to purge it from the glosses of the pharisees. He that slayeth shall be guilty, or in danger of judgment; that is to say, if a man murder, his deed testifies against him; there is no more to do than to pronounce sentence of death against him. This text the pharisees extended no farther than to kill with the hand and outward members. But hate, envy, malice, churlishness, and to withdraw help at need, to beguile and circumvent with wiles and subtle bargaining, was no sin at all. No, to bring him whom thou hatest to death with craft and falsehood, so thou didst not put thine hand thereto, was no sin at all. As when they had brought Christ to death wrongfully, and compelled Pilate with subtilty to slay him, they thought themselves pure; insomuch that they would not go into the hall, lest they should defile themselves, and be partakers with Pilate in his blood. And (Acts v.) they said to the apostles; Ye would bring this man's blood upon us; as who would say we slew him not. And Saul, in the first book of Samuel, in the eighteenth chapter, being so wroth with David that he would gladly have had him slain, determined yet that he would not defile himself, but thrust him into the hands of the Philistines that they might slay him, and he himself abide pure.

And as our spiritualty now offer a man mercy once, though he have spoken against holy church, only if he will but perjure and bear a fagot. But if he will not, they do but diet him a season, to win him and make him tell

more, and deliver him to the lay power, saying, He hath deserved death by our laws, and ye ought to kill him, howbeit we desire it not.

But Christ restores the law again, and saith, To be angry with thy neighbour, is to slay him, and to deserve death. For the law goes as well on the heart as on the hand. He that hates his brother is a murderer. 1 John iii. If then the blind hand deserve death, how much more those parts which have the sight of reason! And he that saith Racha, or whatsoever sign of wrath it be, or that provokes to wrath, hath not only deserved that men should immediately pronounce sentence of death upon him, but also that when death is pronounced, they should gather a council, to decree what horrible death he should suffer. And he that calls his brother fool, hath sinned down to hell.

Shall then a man not be angry at all, nor rebuke or punish? Yes, if thou be a father or a mother, master or mistress, husband, lord, or ruler; yet with love and mercy, that the anger, rebuke, or punishment exceed not the fault or trespass. May a man be angry with love? Yea, mothers can be so with their children. It is a loving anger that hates only the vice, and studies to mend the person. But here is forbidden, not only wrath against father, mother, and all that have governance over thee, which is to be angry and to grudge against God himself, and that the ruler shall not be wroth without a cause against the subject; but also all private wrath against thy neighbour over whom thou hast no rule, nor he over thee, no, though he do thee wrong. For he that doth wrong, lacketh wit and discretion, and cannot amend till he be informed and taught lovingly. Therefore thou must refrain thy wrath, and tell him his fault lovingly, and with kindness win him to thy Father; for he is thy brother, as well made and as dear bought as thou, and as well beloved, though he be yet childish and lack discretion.

But some will say, I will not hate my neighbour nor yet love him or do him good—Yes, thou must love him: for the first commandment, out of which all others flow, is, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy might. That is, thou must keep all his commandments with love. Love must keep thee from killing or hurting thy neighbour, and from coveting in thine heart whatsoever is his. And (1 John iv.)

This commandment have we of him, that he which loveth God, love his brother also. And again, (1 John iii.) he that hath the substance of this world, and seeth his brother have necessity, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how is the love of God in him? He then that helpeth not at need loveth not God, but breaketh the first commandment. Let us love, therefore, saith St. John, not with word and tongue, but in deed and truth. And again St. John saith in the said place, He that loveth not his brother abideth yet still in death. And of love, Moses hath texts enough. But the pharisees glossed them out, saying, they were but good counsels if a man desired to be perfect, but not precepts. (Exod. xxiii.) If thou meet thine enemy's ox or ass going astray, thou shalt in any wise bring them to him again. And if thou see thine enemy's ass fall down under his burden, thou shalt help him up again. And, (Levit. xix.) Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart, but shalt in anywise rebuke thy neighbour, that thou bear no sin for his sake. For if thou study not to amend thy neighbour when he sinneth, so art thou partaker of his sins. And therefore when God taketh vengeance and sendeth whatsoever plague it be, to punish open sinners, thou must perish with them. For thou didst sin in the sight of God as deep as they, because thou didst not love the law of God, to maintain it with all thine heart, soul, power, and might. Is not he that sees his neighbour's house in jeopardy to be set on fire, and warns not, nor helps in time to avoid the peril, worthy, if his neighbour's house be burnt up, that his be burnt also; seeing it was in his power to have kept all out of jeopardy, if he would; as he would no doubt if he had loved his neighbour? Even so, when God sends a general pestilence or war to thy city, to punish the sin thereof; art thou not worthy that thine house should be infected or perish, if thou mightest have kept it from sinning, and thou hadst been willing thereto? But if thou do thy best to further the law of God, and to keep thy land or neighbours from sinning against God, then, though it help not, thou shalt bear no sin for their sakes when they be punished. He therefore that loves the law of God, may be bold in time of pestilence and all jeopardy to believe in God. And again in the same place, Thou shalt not avenge thyself, nor bear hate in mind against the children of thy people; but shalt love thy fellow as thyself. I am the Lord. As

who should say, For my sake shalt thou do it. And, (Deut. x.) The Lord your God is the God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, mighty and terrible, who regards no man's person or degree, nor takes gifts; but doth right to the fatherless and the widow, and loves the stranger, to give him raiment and food: love therefore the stranger, for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. And, (Levit. xix.) If a stranger sojourn by thee, in your land, see that ye vex him not. But let the stranger, that dwells among you, be as one of yourselves, and love him as thyself: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord. As who should say, Love him for my sake.

Notwithstanding, when thy neighbour hath showed thee more unkindness than God hath love, then mayest thou hate him, and not before. But thou must love him for God's sake, till he fight against God to destroy the name and glory of God.

16. *Therefore when thou offerest thy gift at the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go first and reconcile thyself unto thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Agree with thine adversary at once while thou art in the way with him, lest thine adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the minister, and thou be cast into prison. Verily, I say unto thee, thou shalt not come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.*

This text, with the similitude, is somewhat subtle, and binds both him that has offended to reconcile himself as much as in him is, and him that is offended to forgive and to be at one. The offerings were signs, and certified a man that God was at one with him, and was his friend and loved him. For the fat of beasts was offered and wine thereto, as though God had sat, and eaten, and drunk, with them; and the rest they and their households did eat before God, as though they had eaten and drunk with God, and were commanded to be joyful and to make good cheer, fully certified that God was at one with them, and had forgot all old offences, and now loved them, that he would fulfil all his promises of mercy to them.

Now will God receive no sacrifice: that is, he will neither forgive, nor fulfil any of his promises, except we be first reconciled unto our brethren, whether we have

offended, or be offended. In the chapter following thou readest, If ye forgive, your Father shall forgive you. And, Hosea vi. I love mercy, and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God, more than I do burnt offerings; that is to say, the knowledge of the appointments made between God and us; what he will have us to do first, and then what he will do for us again. And, Isaiah lviii. God refuses fasting and punishing of the body that was united with cruelty, and saith that he desired no such fast. But saith, This fast require I, that ye be merciful, and forgive, and clothe the naked, and feed the hungry, &c. Then call, saith he, and the Lord shall answer: cry, and he shall say, See, here I am.

And that similitude will, that as a man here, if he will no otherwise agree, must suffer the extremity of the law, if he be brought before a judge, for the judge hath no power to forgive or to remit, but to condemn him in the uttermost of the law; even so, if we will not forgive one another here, we shall have judgment of God, without all mercy.

And that some make purgatory out of the saying of "the last farthing," they show their deep ignorance. For, first, no similitude holds every word and syllable of the similitude. Furthermore, when they dispute, Till he pay the last farthing; therefore, He shall pay. But not in hell, therefore, in purgatory. A wise reason! I will not forgive thee till I be dead or while I live; therefore, I will do it after my death! and a thousand like might be named.

17. *Ye have heard how it was said to them of old time, Commit not adultery. But I say to you, that whosoever looketh on a wife, lusting after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.*

This commandment, Commit no adultery, the pharisees blinded and corrupted with their sophistry and leaven, interpreting, that the concupiscence of the heart, lewd toys, filthy gestures, unclean words, clipping, kissing, and so forth, were not to be imputed for sin, but the act and deed alone; though Moses says in the text, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, &c. But Christ addeth light and salt, and brings the precept to its true understanding and natural cast again, and condemns the root of sin, the concupiscence and consent of the heart. Before the world, I am no murderer till I have killed with mine hand; but

before God, I kill, if I hate; yea, if I love not, and of love keep myself both from doing hurt, and also be ready and prepared to help at need. Even so the consent of the heart, with all other means that follow thereof, are adultery before God, as well as the deed itself.

Finally, I am an adulterer before God, if I so love not my neighbour, that very love forbid me to covet his wife. Love is the fulfilling of all commandments. And without love it is impossible to abstain from sinning against my neighbour in any precept, if occasion be given.

Carnal love will not suffer a mother to rob her child, no, it makes her rob herself to make it rich. A father shall never lust after his son's wife; no, he cares more for her chastity than his son himself does. Even so would love to my neighbour keep me from sinning against him.

Adultery is a damnable thing in the sight of God, and much mischief follows thereof. David to save his honour was driven to commit grievous murder also. It is unright in the sight of God and man that thy child should be at another man's cost, and be another man's heir. Neither canst thou or the mother have lightly a quiet conscience to God, or a happy heart as long as it so is. Moreover what greater shame canst thou do thy neighbour or what greater displeasure! What if it never be known nor any child come thereof! The most precious gift that a man hath in this world from God, is the true heart of his wife, to abide by him in wealth and woe, and to bear all fortunes with him. Of that hast thou robbed him; for after she hath once coupled herself to thee, she shall not readily love him any more so truly; but haply hate him and procure his death. Moreover thou hast untaught her to fear God, and hast made her to sin against God. For she promised to God, and not to man only; for the law of matrimony is God's ordinance. For it is written, (Gen. xxxix.) When Potiphar's wife would have Joseph to lie with her, he answered, How could I do this wickedness and sin against God? yea, verily, it is impossible to sin against man, except thou sin against God first. Finally, read chronicles and stories, and see what has followed of adultery.

What shall we say, that some doctors have disputed and doubted whether single fornication should be sin, when it is condemned both by Christ and Moses too? And Paul testifieth, (1 Cor. vi.) that no fornicator or whoremonger

shall possess the kingdom of God. It is right that all men that hope in God, should bring up their fruit in the fear and knowledge of God, and not leave his seed where he cares not what come thereof.

18. *Wherefore if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is better for thee that one of thy members perish, than that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And even so, if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is better for thee that one of thy members perish, than that thy whole body should be cast into hell.*

This is not meant of the outward members. For then we must cut off nose, ears, hand, and foot; yea, we must procure to destroy the seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and feeling, and so every man kill himself. But it is a phrase or speech of the Hebrew tongue, and wills that we cut off occasions, as dancing, kissing, riotous eating and drinking, and the lust of the heart, and filthy imaginations, that move a man to concupiscence. Let every man have his wife, and think her the fairest and the best conditioned; and every woman her husband so too. For God has blessed thy wife and made her without sin to thee, which ought to seem a beautiful fairness. And all that ye suffer together, the one with the other, is blessed also, and made the very cross of Christ and pleasant in the sight of God. Why should she then be loathsome to thee, because of a little suffering, that thou shouldest lust after another, that should defile thy soul, and slay thy conscience, and make thee suffer everlastingly?

19. *It is said, whosoever putteth away his wife, let him give her a testimonial of the divorcement. But I say unto you, whosoever putteth away his wife, except it be for fornication, maketh her to break wedlock; and whosoever marrieth the divorced, breaketh wedlock.*

Moses (Deut. xxiv.) permitted his Israelites in extreme necessity, as when they so hated their wives, that they abhorred the company of them, then to put them away, to avoid a worse inconvenience. Whereof ye read also Matt. xix. And he added thereto, that they might not receive them again after they had been known of any other persons. Which license the Jews abused, and put away

their wives for every light or feigned cause, and whensoever they lusted. But Christ calls back again, and interprets the law after the first ordinance, and cuts off all causes of divorcement, save on the wife's part, when she breaks her matrimony.*

20. *Again, ye have heard how it was said to them of old time, Forswear not thyself, but pay thine oaths unto the Lord. But I say unto you, Swear not at all, neither by heaven, for it is the seat of God; neither by the earth, for it is his footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great king; neither shalt thou swear by thine head, for thou canst not make a white hair or a black. But your communication shall be, Yea, yea, nay, nay. For if aught be above that, it proceedeth of evil.*

As to hate in the heart, or to covet another man's wife, was no sin with the pharisees; no more was it to hide one thing in the heart, and to speak another with the mouth, to deceive a man's neighbour, if not bound with an oath. And though Moses says, (Levit. xix.) Lie not, nor deceive any man his neighbour or one another, yet they interpreted it but good counsel, if a man desired to be perfect; but no precept to bind under pain of sin. And so by that means, not only they that spake true, but also they that lied to deceive, were compelled to swear and to confirm their words with oaths, if they would be believed.

But Christ bringeth light and salt to the text, which the pharisees had darkened and corrupted with the mist of their sophistry, and forbids to swear at all, either by God or any creature of God's; for thou canst swear by no oath at all, except the dishonour shall redound to the name of God. If thou swear, By God it is so, or By God I will do this or that, the meaning is, that thou makest God judge, to avenge it of thee, if it be not as thou sayest, or if thou shalt not do as thou promisest.† Now if truth be not in thy words, thou shamest thine heavenly Father, and testifiest that thou believest that he is no

* Tindal then makes various observations and suggestions relative to divorce, and the duty of the temporal power to enforce laws relative to this and other subjects.

† Tindal here refers to judicial and solemn oaths, not to profane swearing.

righteous judge, nor will avenge unrighteousness; but that he is wicked as thou art, and consents and laughs at thee, while thou deceivest thy brother, who is as well created after the likeness of God, and as dear bought with the precious blood of Christ, as thou. And thus through thee, a wicked son, is the name of thy Father dishonoured, and his law not feared, nor his promises believed. And when thou makest oath by the gospel book, or bible, the meaning is, that God, if thou lie, shall not fulfil unto thee the promises of mercy therein written. But, contrariwise, bring upon thee all the curses, plagues, and vengeance therein threatened to the disobedient and evil doers. And even so when thou makest oath by any creature, as by bread or salt, the meaning is, that thou desirest, that the Creator thereof shall avenge it of thee, if thou lie, &c. wherefore our dealing ought to be so substantial, that our words might be believed without an oath. Our words are the signs of the truth of our hearts, in which ought to be pure and single love toward thy brother; for whatsoever proceeds not of love is damnable. Now falsehood to deceive him, and pure love, cannot stand together. It cannot therefore but be damnable sin, to deceive thy brother with lying, though thou add no oath to thy words. Much more damnable is it then to deceive and to add an oath thereto, &c.

Howbeit all manner of swearing is not here forbidden, no more than all manner of killing, when the commandment saith, Kill not; for judges and rulers must kill. Even so ought they, when they put any man in office, to take an oath of him that he shall be true and faithful and diligent therein. And of their subjects it is lawful to take oaths, and of all that offer themselves to bear witness. But if the superior would compel the inferior to swear that which should be to the dishonour of God, or hurting of an innocent, the inferior ought rather to die than to swear. Neither ought a judge to compel a man to swear against himself, that he make him not sin and forswear, whereof it is enough spoken in another place. But here is forbidden swearing between neighbour and neighbour, and in all our private business and daily communication. For customable swearing, though we lied not, robs the name of God of his due reverence and fear. And in our daily communication and business one with the other, there is so much vanity of words, that we cannot but in many things

lie, which to confirm with an oath, though we beguile not, is to take the name of God in vain, and unreverently sin against the second precept. Now to lie for the intent to beguile, is damnable of itself, how much more then to abuse the holy name of God thereto, and to call to God for vengeance upon thine own self?

Many cases yet there are daily between man and man, in which charity compels to swear: as if I know that my neighbour is falsely slandered, I am bound to report the truth, and may lawfully swear, yea, and am bound if it need, and that though not before a judge. And unto the weak, where yea and nay have lost their credence through the multitude of liars, a man may lawfully swear, to put them out of doubt. Which yet comes of the evil of them that abuse their language to deceive withal. Finally, to swear to do evil is damnable, and to perform that is double damnation. Herod's oath made him not innocent and guiltless of the death of John the Baptist, though the hypocrite had not known what his wife's daughter would have asked. And when men say a king's word must stand; that is truth, if his oath or promise be lawful and expedient.

In all our promises it is to be added, If God will, and if there be no lawful hinderance. And though it be not added, it is to be interpreted, as though it were added. As, if I borrow thy sword, and by the hour I promise to bring it thee again, thou be beside thyself. If I promise to pay by a certain day, and be in the mean time robbed or decayed so that I cannot perform it; I am not forsworn, if mine heart meant truly when I promised. And many like cases there are which are touched upon in other places....

21. *Ye have heard, how it is said, An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you, that ye withstand not wrong. But if a man give thee a blow on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will go to law with thee and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak thereto. And if any man compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh, and from him that would borrow, turn not away.*

Christ here intends not to disannul the temporal

regiment,* and to forbid rulers to punish evil doers, no more than he meant to destroy matrimony, when he forbad to lust, and to covet another man's wife in the heart. But as he there forbad that which defiles matrimony, even so he forbids here that which troubles, disquiets, and destroys the temporal regiment, and that thing to forbid which the temporal regiment was ordained; which is, that no man avenge himself. Christ meddles not with the temporal regiment. But in all this long sermon he contends against the pharisees' false doctrine, and salteth the law, to purge it of the corruption of their filthy glosses, and to bring it unto the right taste and true understanding again.

For the pharisees had so interpreted that law of Moses, which pertained only unto the rulers, that every private person might avenge himself, and do his adversary as much harm again, as he had received of him.

Now if he that is angry, have deserved that men pronounce death upon him; and he that saith "Racha," hath deserved that men should gather a council to determine some sundry and cruel death for so heinous a crime; and if he that calleth his brother "Fool" have deserved hell; what deserves he that smites or avenges himself with his own hand? Here is forbidden therefore private wrath only, and that a man avenge himself.

To turn the other cheek is a manner of speaking, and not to be understood as the words sound; as was also to cut off the hand, and to pluck out the eye. And it is as we command our children not only not to come nigh a brook or water, but also not to be so hardy as once to look that way, neither to look on fire, nor once to think on fire, which are impossible to be observed. More is spoken than meant, to frighten them and to make them perceive that it is in earnest that we command. Even so is the meaning here, that we in no wise avenge, but be prepared ever to suffer as much more, and never think it lawful to avenge, how great soever the injury be; for he himself turned not the other cheek, when he was smitten before the high priest; nor yet Paul, when he was buffetted before the high priest also. But ye have heard a little above, Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the earth. Let all the world study to do thee wrong, yea, let them do thee wrong; and yet if thou be meek, thou shalt have food and raiment enough for thee and thine. And moreover, if the worst

* Power or government.

come, God shall yet set such a tyrant over thee, that, if thou be meek and canst be content that he poll thee properly, and even as thou mayest bear, shall defend thee from all others. Who is polled intolerably, so that his life is bitter and even death to him, but he that is impatient and cannot suffer to be polled? Yea, poll thyself and prevent others, and give the bailiff or like officer, now a capon, now a pig, now a goose, and so to thy landlord likewise; or if thou have a great farm, now a lamb, now a calf; and let thy wife visit thy landlady three or four times in the year, with spiced cakes, and apples, pears, cherries, and such like. And be thou ready with thine oxen or horses three or four, or half a dozen days in the year, to fetch home their wood, or to plough their land; yea, and if thou have a good horse, let them have him good cheap, or take a worse for him, and they shall be thy shield and defend thee, though they be tyrants and care not for God, so that no man else shall dare poll thee. And thereto thou mayest with wisdom get of them that which shall recompense all that thou doest to them. All this I mean, if thou be patient, and wise, and fear God thereto, and love thy neighbour, and do no evil. For if thou keep thyself in favour with hurting thy neighbour, thine end will be evil, and at the last, desperation in this world, and hell after.

But, and if thou canst not poll thyself with wisdom, and laugh and bear a good countenance, as though thou rejoicest while such persons poll thee, every man shall poll thee, and they shall maintain them, and not defend thee. Let this therefore be a common proverb, Be contented to be polled of some man, or to be polled of every man.*

Ye must understand that there are two states or degrees in this world; the kingdom of heaven, which is the regiment of the gospel,—and the kingdom of this world, which is the temporal regiment. In the first state there is neither father, mother, son, daughter; neither master, mistress, maid, manservant, nor husband, nor wife, nor lord, nor subject, nor man, nor woman. But Christ is all, and each to the other is Christ himself. There is none better than the other, but all alike good, all brethren, and Christ only is Lord over all. Neither is there any other thing to do, or other law, save to love one another as Christ loved us. In the temporal regiment is husband, wife, father, mother,

* A painful description of the state of the middle and lower classes before the Reformation.

son, daughter, master, mistress, maid, manservant, lord, and subject.

Now is every person a double person, and under both the regiments. In the first regiment, thou art a person for thine own self, under Christ and his doctrine, and mayest neither hate nor be angry, and much less fight or avenge. But must, after the example of Christ, humble thyself, forsake and deny thyself, and hate thyself, and cast thyself away, and be meek and patient, and let every man go over thee, and tread thee under foot, and do thee wrong; and yet love them, and pray for them, as Christ did for his crucifiers. For love is all, and what is not of love, that is damnable, and cast out of that kingdom.

For that kingdom is the knowledge of God and Christ. But he that loves not, knows neither God nor Christ; therefore he that loves not, is not of that kingdom. The minor is thus proved: he that knows God and Christ, sees light, for Christ is light; but he that hates his brother is in darkness, and walks in darkness, and knows not whither he goeth, for darkness hath blinded his eyes. (1 John ii.) Therefore, he that hates his brother knows not what Christ hath done for him, and therefore hath no true faith, nor is of the spiritual kingdom of God.

To hate thyself, that shalt thou get, if thou considerest thine own sins and the deep damnation that belongs thereto, with due repentance. And to love, that thou shalt obtain, if thou behold the great and infinite mercy of God with strong faith. There is none so great an enemy to thee in this world, but thou shalt lightly love him, if thou look well on the love that God showed thee in Christ.

In the temporal regiment thou art a person in respect of others;* thou art a husband, father, mother, master, mistress, lord, ruler; or wife, son, daughter, servant, subject, &c. And there thou must do according to thine office. If thou be a father, thou must do the office of a father and rule, or else thou condemnest thyself. Thou must bring all under obedience. Thou must have obedience of thy wife, of thy servants, and of thy subjects; and the other must obey. If they will not obey with love, thou must chide and fight, as far as the law of God and the law of the land will suffer thee. And when thou canst not rule them, thou art bound, in many cases, to deliver

* Having relative duties towards others.

them unto the higher officer, from whom thou didst take the charge over them.

Now to our purpose—Whether a man may resist violence and defend or avenge himself? I say nay, in the first state, where thou art a person for thyself alone, and Christ's disciple. There thou must love, and of love do, study, and enforce; yea, and suffer all things, as Christ did, to make peace, that the blessing of God may come upon thee, which saith, Blessed are the peace makers, for they shall be the children of God. If thou suffer and keepest peace in thyself only, thy blessing is, the possession of this world. But if thou so love the peace of thy brethren, that thou leave nothing undone or unsuffered to further it, thy blessing is, thou shalt be God's son, and consequently possess heaven.

But in the worldly state, where thou art no private man, but a person in respect of others, thou not only mayest, but also must, and art bound under pain of damnation to execute thine office; where thou art a father, thou must have obedience; and to whom thou art a husband, of her thou must require obedience and chastity; and to get that, attempt all that the law of the land commands and wills. And of thy servants thou must exact obedience and fear, and mayest not suffer thyself to be despised. And where thou art a ruler thereto appointed, thou must take, imprison, and slay too; not of malice and hate, to avenge thyself, but to defend thy subjects, and to maintain thine office.

Concerning thyself, oppress not thy subjects with rent, fines, or custom at all, neither pill them with taxes and such like, to maintain thine own lusts; but be loving and kind to them, as Christ was to thee, for they are his and the price of his blood. But those that are evil doers among them, and vex their brethren, and will not know thee for their judge and fear thy law, them smite, and upon them draw thy sword, and put it not up until thou hast done thine office; yet without hate to the person, for his master's sake, and because he is in the first regiment thy brother, but to amend him only; or if it cannot be but that thou must lose one to save many, then execute thine office with such affection, with such compassion and sorrow of heart, as thou wouldest cut off thine own arm to save the rest of the body.

Take an example : Thou art in thy father's house among thy brethren and sisters. There if one fight with another, or if any do thee wrong, thou mayest not avenge nor smite, for that pertains to thy father only. But if thy father give thee authority in his absence, and command thee to smite if they will not be ruled, now thou art another person. Notwithstanding, yet thou hast not put off the first person, but art a brother still, and must ever love, and try all things to rule with love. But if love will not serve, then thou must use the office of the other person, or sin against thy father. Even so when thou art a temporal person, thou puttest not off the spiritual ; therefore thou must ever love. But when love will not help, thou must with love execute the office of the temporal person, or sin against God. A mother can smite and love ; and so mayest thou, with love, execute the office of thy second state. And the wife, son, servant, and subject are brethren in the first state, and put not that person off, by reason of the second degree ; and therefore must they love ever, and with love pay custom, tribute, fear, honour, and obedience to whom they belong, as Paul teaches, Rom. xiii. And though the other does not his duty and love thee, but rule thee with rigorousness and deal unkindly with thee, thou not deserving it, yet cleave thou to Christ, and love still, and let not his evil overcome thy goodness and make thee evil also.

And as after the example above, thy father hath power over thee, to command thee to use his power over thy brethren, even so hath thy master, to give thee his authority over thy fellows. Which when thou hast, thou must remember that thou art their fellow still, and bound to love still. But if love alone will not help, then put thy master's authority unto thy love. And so the ruler has power over thee, to send thee to use violence upon thy neighbour, to take him, to prison him, and haply to kill him too. And thou must ever love thy neighbour in thine heart, by the reason that he is thy brother in the first state, and yet obey thy ruler, and go with the constable or like officer, and break open thy neighbour's door, if he will not open it in the king's name; yea, and if he will not yield in the king's name, thou must lay on, and smite him to the ground till he be subdued. And look what harm he gets, yea, though he be slain, that be on his own head. For thine heart loved him, and thou desiredst him lovingly to

obey, and hast not avenged thyself in that state where thou art a brother. But in the worldly state, where thou art another manner of person in this case, thou hast executed the authority of him that hath such power of God to command thee, and where thou wert damned of God if thou didst not obey.

And like is it, if thy lord or prince send thee a warfare into another land; thou must obey at God's commandment, and go, and avenge thy prince's quarrel, which thou knowest not but that it is right. And when thou comest thither, remember what thou art in the first state with them against whom thou must fight, how that they are thy brethren and as deeply bought with Christ's blood as thou, and for Christ's sake to be beloved in thine heart. And see that thou desire neither their life nor goods, save to avenge thy prince's quarrel, and to bring them under thy prince's power. And be content with thy prince's wages, and with such part of the spoil, when thou hast won, as thy prince or his deputy appointeth thee. For if thou hate them in thine heart, and covet their goods, and art glad that an occasion is found, thou carest not whether it be right or wrong, that thou mayest go a robbing and murdering unpunished, then art thou a murderer in the sight of God, and thy blood will be shed again for it, either in the same war following, or when thou art come home, as thou there didst in thine heart, so shalt thou rob and steal, and be hanged for thy labour, or slain by some other mischief.

Now concerning the goods of this world, it is easy to judge. In the first state or degree, thou oughtest to be thankful to Christ, and to love, to give and to lend to them that are bought with his precious blood, all that thou art able. For all that thou owest to Christ whose servant thou art to do his will, that thou must pay them. And what thou doest to them, that same thou doest to Christ; and what thou art not ready to do for them, that deniest thou to do for Christ. But if any of thy brethren will withhold, or take away by force above that thou mayest spare, by the reason of some office that thou hast in the second state; or invade thee violently, and lay more on thy back than thou canst bear; then hold thine heart and hand, that thou neither hate nor smite, and speak fairly and lovingly, and let neighbours go between. And when thou hast proved all means of love in vain, then complain to the law, and to the officer that is set to be thy

father, and defend thee, and to judge between thee and thy brother.

Thou wilt say,—The text forbids me to go to law; for it saith, if a man will go to law with thee and take thy coat, thou must let him have gown and all. If I must suffer myself to be robbed by the law, wilt thou say, by what right can I with law recover mine own? I answer,—Behold the text diligently. For by no right of law can a man take thy coat from thee: for the law was ordained of God, to maintain thee in thy right and to forbid that wrong should be done thee. Wherefore the text means thus; That where the law is unjustly ministered, and the governors and judges corrupt, and take bribes, and be partial, there be patient and ready to suffer ever as much more, whatsoever unright be done thee, rather than of impatience thou shouldest avenge thyself on thy neighbour, or rail or make insurrection against the superiors whom God has set over thee. For to rise against them, is to rebel against God, and against thy father when he scourges thee for thine offence, and a thousand times more sin than to avenge thee on thy neighbour. And to rail on them is to rail on God, as though thou wouldest blaspheme him, if he made thee sick, poor, or of low degree, or otherwise than thou wouldest be made thyself.

Thou wilt haply say,—The subjects ever choose the ruler, and make him swear to keep their law, and to maintain their privileges and liberty, and upon that submit themselves unto him; therefore, if he rule amiss, they are not bound to obey, but may resist him, and put him down again. I answer,—your argument is naught. For the husband swears to his wife; yet though he forswear himself, she hath no power to compel him. Also though a master keep not covenant with his servant, or one neighbour with another, yet neither servant, nor yet neighbour, though he be under no obedience, hath power to avenge; but the vengeance pertains ever to a higher officer, to whom thou must complain.

Yea, but you will say,—It is not alike. For the whole body of the subjects choose the ruler. Now he that is to bind, he it is to loose: therefore, if he rule amiss, they that set him up may put him down again. I answer,—God, and not the common people, choose the prince, though he choose him by them. For (Deut. xvi.) God commands to choose and set up officers; and therefore is God the

chief chooser and setter up of them, and so must he be the chief putter down of them again; so that without his special commandment, they may not be put down again. Now God has given no commandment to put them down again; but contrariwise, when we have anointed a king over us at his commandment, he saith,—Touch not mine anointed. And what jeopardy it is to rise against thy prince that is anointed over thee, how evil soever he be, see in the history of king David, and throughout all the books of the kings. The authority of the king is the authority of God; and all the subjects compared to the king, are but subjects still, though the king be ever so evil, as a thousand sons gathered together are but sons still; and the commandment, Obey your fathers, goeth over all, as well as over one. Even so goeth the commandment over all the subjects: Obey your prince and the higher power, and he that resisteth him, resisteth God, and getteth him damnation. And unto your argument, I answer,—he that bindeth with absolute power, and without any higher authority, his is the might to loose again. But he that bindeth at another man's commandment, may not loose again without the commandment of the same. As they of London choose them a mayor; but may not put him down again, how evil soever he be, without the authority of him with whose license they chose him. As long as the powers or officers be one under another, if the inferior do thee wrong, complain to the higher. But if the highest of all do thee wrong, thou must complain to God only. Wherefore the only remedy against evil rulers is, that thou turn thine eyes to thyself and thine own sin, and then look up to God and say, O Father, for our sin, and the sin of our fathers, is this misery come upon us, we know not thee as our Father, to obey thee, and to walk in thy ways, and therefore thou knowest not us as thy sons, to set loving schoolmasters over us. We hate thy law, and therefore hast thou, through the wickedness of unrighteous judges, made that law that was for our defence, to be a tyrant most cruel, and to oppress us, and do us injury above all other kinds of violence and robbing. And amend thy living, and be meek and patient, and let them rob as much as they will, yet shall God give thee food and raiment, and an honest possession in the earth, to maintain thee and thine withal.

Moreover concerning thy goods, thou must remember how that thou art a person in the temporal regiment, and

the king, as he is over thy body, even so is he lord of thy goods, and of him thou holdest them, not for thyself only, but to maintain thy wife, children, and servants, and to maintain the king, the realm, and the country, and town or city where thou dwellest. Wherefore thou mayest not suffer them to be wasted, that thou wert not able to do thy duty, no more than a servant may suffer his master's goods to go to wreck negligently. For he that provides not for his, and especially for them of his own household, saith Paul, denies the faith, and is worse than an infidel. But every man is bound to labour diligently and truly, and therewith so soberly to live, that he may have enough for him and his, and somewhat above, for them that cannot labour, or by chance are fallen into necessity. And of that give and lend, and look not for it again. And if that suffice not thy neighbour's necessity, then speak and make labour to thy brethren, to help also. For it is a common proverb, Many hands make light work, and many may bear that which one alone cannot.

And thy wife, thy children, and servants, art thou bound to defend. If any man would force thy wife, thy daughter, or thy maid, it is not enough for thee to look on, and say, God amend you. Nay, thou must execute thine office and authority which the king gives thee. And by the way thou must defend thy master and his goods, and the king's goods, which thou hast to maintain thy wife and household withal, and thy neighbour that goeth with thee, against thieves and murderers. And against all such persons lay about thee, and do as thou wouldest do if thou were under the king's standard, against his enemies which invade the realm. For all such persons are mortal enemies to the realm, and seek to put down the king, and law, and all together, and to make that it might be lawful to sin unpunished. And of this manner if thou mark well the difference of these two states and regiments, thou mayest clear up all like doubts that shall be laid against thee.

Moreover when I say, There are two regiments, the spiritual and temporal; even so I say that every person baptized to keep the law of God, and to believe in Christ, is under both the regiments, and is both a spiritual person and also a temporal, and under the officers of both the regiments; so that the king is as deep under the spiritual officer, to hear out of God's word what he ought to

believe, and how to live, and how to rule, as is the poorest beggar in the realm. And even so the spiritual officer, if he sin against his neighbour, or teach false doctrine, is under the king's, or temporal correction, how high soever he be. And look how it is to be condemned for the king to withdraw himself from the obedience of the spiritual officer; that is to say, from hearing his duty, to do it, and from hearing his vices rebuked, to amend them; so is it to be condemned for the spiritual officer, how high soever he be, to withdraw himself from under the king's correction, if he teach falsely, or sin against any temporal law.

Finally, ye must consider that Christ here teaches his disciples, and them that should be the light and salt in living and doctrine, to shine in the weak and feeble eyes of the world, diseased, and accustomed to darkness, so that without great pain they can behold no light; and to salt their old festered sores, and to fret out the rotten flesh, even to the hard quick, that it smart again; and spare no degree. But tell all men, high and low, their faults, and warn them of their jeopardy, and exhort them to the right way. Now such schoolmasters shall find small favour and friendship with the rulers of this world, or defence in their laws. As Christ warns them, (Matt. x.) saying, I send you out as sheep among wolves. Beware therefore of men, for they shall deliver you up to their councils, and shall scourge you in their synagogues or council-houses, and ye shall be brought before the chief rulers and kings, for my sake. And he there teaches them, as here, to arm themselves with patience, and to go forth boldly, with a strong faith and trust in the succour and assistance of God only, and to plant the gospel with all love and meekness, and to water it with their own blood, as Christ did. Thou mayest not in that state come with a sword, to defend either thyself or thy gospel, and to compel men to worship thee as God, and to believe what thou wilt. Nay, the sheep use no such regiment among wolves. If thou be a sheep, thou art not in evil taking if thou canst bring to pass that the wolf be content with thy fleece only, and to shear thee yearly.

Give to him that asketh, and from him that would borrow turn not away. Luke saith, Give to whosoever asketh thee: that is to say, Wheresoever thou seest need, or seest not the contrary, but there may be need; to the uttermost of thy power there open thine heart, and be

merciful only. And of mercifulness set God thy Father, and Christ thy Lord and Master for an example; and strive to be as like them as thou canst. If thou be merciful, God has bound himself to be merciful to thee again. Lo, is not this an exceeding great thing, that God, who of no right ought to be bound to his creatures, hath yet put it wholly in thine own hands, to bind him against the day of thy tribulation, then to show thee mercy?

Concerning lending, proceed by the aforesaid rule of mercy. Many, in extreme need, yet ashamed to beg, shall desire thee to lend. Unto such, instead of lending, give; or say thus, Lo, here is as much as ye require. If ye can pay it again, well, do so, and ye shall find me ready against another time, to lend or give, if need be, as much more. But and if ye shall not be able to pay it again, trouble not your conscience, I give it you. We be all one man's children: one man hath bought us all with his blood, and bound us to help one another. And with so doing, thou shalt win the heart of him to thy Father.

Concerning merchandise, and chapmen, the less borrowing were among them, the better should the commonwealth be. If it were possible, I would it were, to exchange ware for ware, or money for ware, or part money and part ware. But if it will not be; but that a man to get his living with, must needs lend, and call for it again to find his household, and to pay his debts; then in the lending, be first single and harmless as a dove, and then as wise as a serpent. And take heed to whom thou lendest. If when thou hast lent to an honest man, God visit him, and take away his goods, with what chance it be, whether by sea or land, that he is not able to pay thee; then to prison him, or to sue him at the law, or once to speak an unkind word, were against the law of love, and contrary to showing mercy. There thou must suffer with thy neighbour and brother as Christ did with thee, and as God doth daily. If an unthrift has beguiled thee, and spent thy goods away, and has not to pay, then hold thine hand and heart, that thou avenge not thyself; but love him, and pray for him, and remember how God has promised to bless the patient and meek. Nevertheless, because such persons corrupt the common manners, and cause the name of God the less to be feared, men ought to complain upon such persons to the officer that is ordained of God to punish evil doers, and the officer is bound to

punish them. If thou hast lent to a fox, who with cavillation will keep thy goods from thee; then if the ruler and the law will not help thee to thy right, do as it is above said of him that will go to law with thee, and take thy coat from thee. That is to say, be content to lose that and as much more to it, rather than thou wouldest avenge thyself. Let not the wickedness of other men pluck thee from God. But abide by God and his blessings, and tarry his judgment. Liberality is mercifulness that bindeth God to be merciful again. Covetousness, the root of all evil, and father of all false prophets, and the schoolmaster that teaches the messengers of Satan to disguise themselves like to the messengers of Christ, is merciless; that shall have judgment without mercy; and therefore Christ exhorts all his so diligently, and above all things to be liberal, and to beware of covetousness.

22. *Ye have heard, how it is said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies. Bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you. Pray for them which do you wrong and persecute you. That ye may be the children of your heavenly Father. For he maketh his sun to arise over the evil and over the good, and sendeth rain upon the righteous and unrighteous. For if ye love them that love you, what reward shall ye have? do not the publicans so? And if ye be friendly to your brethren only, what singular thing do ye? do not the publicans likewise? Ye shall therefore be perfect, as your Father, which is in heaven, is perfect.*

This text of hating a man's enemy, stands not in any one place of the Bible, but is gathered of many places, in which God commands the children of Israel to destroy their enemies, the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Amalekites, and other heathen people; as the Moabites, and Ammonites, which sought to bring them out of the favour of God, and to destroy the name of God. The Amalekites came behind them, and slew all that were faint and weary by the way, as they came out of Egypt. The Moabites and Ammonites hired Balaam to curse them, and beguiled them with their women, and made a great plague among them. These and the like nations were perpetual enemies to their land which God had given them, and also of the name of God, and of their faith. For which cause they

not only might lawfully, but were also bound to hate them, and to study their destruction again ; howbeit they might not yet hate, of the said nations, such as were converted to their faith.

Now by reason of such texts as commanded to hate the common enemies of their country, and of God and his law, and of their faith, the pharisees' doctrine was, that a man might lawfully hate all his private enemies without exception, nor was bound to do them good. And yet Moses saith, Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart. And again, Thou shalt not avenge thyself, nor bear hate in thy mind against the children of thy people. And if thine enemy's ass sink under his burden, help to lift him up again. And if his ox or ass go astray, bring them home again ; all which, no doubt, the pharisees interpreted for good counsel, but not for precepts; wherefore Christ salteth their doctrine, and proves that a man is bound both to love and to do good to his enemy; and as a dutiful son, though his brethren be ever so evil, yet to love them, and show them kindness for his father's sake, and to study to amend them. What hast thou to rejoice of, if thy religion be no better than the religion of thieves? For thieves love among themselves ; and so do the covetous of the world, as the usurers and publicans, who bought in great the emperor's tribute, and to make their utmost advantage, did overrate the people. Nay, it is not enough for thee to love thy benefactors only, as monks and friars do, and them of thine own coat and order, or the brethren of thine own abbey only, for among some their love stretches no further, and that shall he that is removed out of another cloister thither well find ; yea, and in some places charity reaches not to all the cells of the same cloister, and to all the monks that were professed in the same place. But lift up thine eyes unto thy heavenly Father, and as thy Father doth, so do thou love all thy Father's children. He ministers sun and rain to good and bad, by which two, understand all his benefits. For of the heat and drought of the sun, and cold and moisture of the rain, spring all things that are necessary to the life of man. Even so provoke thou and draw thine evil brethren to goodness, with patience, with love in word and deed, and pray for them, to Him that is able to make them better and to convert them. And so thou shalt be thy Father's dutiful son, and perfect as he is perfect. The text saith

not, Ye shall be as perfect as God; but perfect after his example. To be perfect in the scripture is not to be a monk or a friar, or never to sin. For Christ teaches not here monks or friars, but his disciples and every christian man and woman. And to be in this life altogether without sin is impossible. But to be perfect, is to have pure doctrine without false opinions, and that thine heart be to follow that learning.

AN EXPOSITION OF THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Take heed to your alms, that ye do it not before men, to be seen of them, or else ye get no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou givest alms, make not a trumpet to be blown before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, to be praised of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. But thou when thou givest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth, that thine alms may be in secret. And then thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

As Christ rebuked their doctrine above, even so here he rebukes their works; for out of devilish doctrine can spring no godly works. But what works rebukes he? verily such as God in the scripture commands, and without which no man can be a christian man; even prayer, fasting, and alms-deeds. For as the scripture, when corrupted with glosses, is no more God's word, even so the deeds commanded in the scripture, when the intent of them is perverted, are no more godly deeds. What said the scribes and pharisees of him, think ye, when he rebuked such manner of works? No doubt as they said when he rebuked their false glosses, that he destroyed the law and the prophets, interpreting the scripture after the literal sense, which killeth, and after his own brain, quite contrary to the common faith of holy church, and the minds of great clerks, and authentic expositions of old holy doctors. Even so here what else could they say, than, "Behold the heretic, and did not we tell you before whereto he would come, and that he kept some mischief behind, and cast not out all his venom at once;—see to what all his godly new doctrine that sounded so sweetly, is come! He

preached all of love, and would have the people saved by faith, so long till that now at the last, he preaches against all deeds of mercy, as prayer, fasting, and alms-deeds, and destroys all good works. His disciples fast no more than dogs, they despise their divine service, and come not to church; yea, and if the holiest of all St. Francis's order ask them for alms, they bid him labour with his hands, and get his living, and say that he that labours not is not worthy to eat, and that God bade that no such strong lubbers should loiter, and go a begging, and be chargeable to the congregation, and eat up what other poor men get with the sweat of their bodies; yea, and at the last ye shall see, if we resist him not betimes, that he shall move the people to insurrection, as Caiaphas said, and the Romans shall come and take our land from us." As ye see in the text, (Luke xxiii.) when they could not drive the people from him with those persuasions, they accused him to Pilate, saying, We have found this fellow perverting the people, and forbidding to pay tribute to Cæsar, and saying that he is Christ, a king. Wherefore thou canst not be Cæsar's friend, if thou let him escape. But after all these blasphemies, yet must the Holy Ghost rebuke the world of their righteousness, yea, of their false righteousness and false holiness, which are neither righteousness nor holiness, but colour of hypocrisy.

Christ here destroys not prayer, fasting, and alms-deeds, but preaches against the false purpose and intent of such works, and perverting the true use; that is to say, their seeking of glory, and that they esteemed themselves righteous thereby, and better than other men, and so despised and condemned their brethren. With our alms, which is as much to say as deeds of mercy, or compassion, we ought to seek our Father's glory only, even the wealth of our brethren, and to win them to the knowledge of our Father, and the keeping of his law. He that seeks the glory of his good works, seeks the glory that belongeth to God, and maketh himself God. Is it not a blind thing of the world, that either they will do no good works at all, or will be God for their good works, and have the glory themselves?

Concerning blowing of trumpets, and ringing of bells, or making a cry, to call men to fetch alms, though the right way be, that we should know in every parish all our poor, and have a common coffer for them; and that

strangers should bring a letter of recommendation with them of their necessity, and that we have a common place to receive them into for the time, and though also we ought to flee all occasions of vain glory, yet while the world is out of order, to do it is not to be condemned. So that the very meaning, both that we blow no trumpets, and that the left hand know not what the right hand doth, is, that we do as secretly as we can, and in no wise seek glory, or receive it if it were proffered; but to do our deeds in singleness of conscience to God, because it is his commandment, and even of pure compassion and love to our brethren; and not that our good deeds, through standing in our own conceit, should cause us to despise them. If thou be tempted to vain glory for thy good deeds, then look on thine evil thereto, and put the one in the one balance, and the other in the other. And then, if thou understand the law of God at all, tell me, which weigheth the heavier.

If what thou doest tempt thee, then consider what thou doest not. If it move thee to set up thy comb,* when thou givest thy brother a farthing or a halfpenny, ponder in thine heart how far thou art off from loving him as well as thyself, and caring for him as much as for thyself. And be sure how much thou lackest of that, so much thou art in sin, and that in damnable sin, if God, for Christ's sake, did not pardon thee; because thine heart mourns therefore, and thou fightest with thyself to come to such perfection. If a peacock looked well at his feet, and marked the evil-favoured shrieking of his voice, he would not be so proud of the beauty of his tail.

Finally; That many dispute, Because God has promised to reward our deeds in heaven, therefore our deeds deserve heaven; and because he promises to show mercy to the merciful, that with our deeds we deserve mercy; and because he promises forgiveness of sins to them that forgive, that our deeds deserve forgiveness of sin, and so justify us:—I answer, First, there is enough spoken thereof in other places; so that to those who have read that, it is superfluous to rehearse the matter again. Furthermore, the argument is naught, and holds by no rule. See ye not that the father and mother have more right to the child and to all it can do, than to an ox or a cow? It is their flesh and blood, nourished up with their labour and

* To be proud.

cost. The life of it, and the maintenance and continuance thereof, is their benefit; so that it is not able to recompense what it owes to its father and mother by a thousand parts.

And though it be not able to do its duty, nor for blindness to know its duty, yet the father and mother promise more gifts still without ceasing, and such as they think should most make it to see love, and provoke it to be willing to do part of its duty. And when it has done amiss, though it have no power to do satisfaction, nor desire or courage to come to the right way again, yet their love and mercy abide still so great to it, that upon appointment of mending, they not only forgive what is past, and fulfil their promise nevertheless, but promise greater gifts than ever before, and to be better father and mother to it than ever they were. Now when it cannot do that thousandth part of its duty, how could it deserve such promises of the father and mother, as a labourer does his hire? The reward thereof comes of the love, mercy, and truth of the father and mother, as well when the child keeps the appointment, as when they fulfil their promise when it has broken the appointment; and not of the deserving of the child.

Even so, if we were not thus drowned in blindness, we should easily see that we cannot do the thousandth part of our duty to God: no, though there were no life to come. If there were no life to come, it were not right that I should touch any creature of God otherwise than he has appointed. Though there were no life to come, it had nevertheless been right that Adam had abstained from the forbidden tree, and from all others too, if they had been forbidden. Yea, and though there were no life to come, it were not the less right that I loved my brother, and forgave him to-day, seeing I shall sin against him to-morrow. Because a father cannot give his children heaven, has he no power to charge them to love one another, and to forgive, and not avenge one another? And has he not right to beat them if they smite each other, because he cannot give them heaven? A bondman that hath a master more cruel than a reasonable man would be to a dog, if there were no heaven, might this bond-servant accuse God of unrighteousness, because he has not made him a master? Now, then, when we cannot do our duty by a thousand parts, though there were no such promises,

and that the thing commanded is no less our duty though no such promise were; it is easy to perceive that the reward promised comes of the goodness, mercy, and truth of the promiser, to make us the more glad to do our duty, and not of the deserving of the receiver. When we have done all we can, we ought to say in our heart, that it was our duty, and that we ought to do a thousand times more; and that God, if he had not promised us mercy, of his goodness in Christ, might yet of right condemn us for that which we have left undone.

And as touching forgiveness of sin; though forgiveness of sin be promised unto thee, yet challenge it not by thy merits, but by the merits of Christ's blood; and hear what Paul saith, (Phil. iii.) Concerning the righteousness of the law I was faultless, or such as no man could rebuke. But the things that were to advantage, I thought damage for Christ's sake; yea, I think all things to be damage, or loss, for the excellent knowledge sake of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whose sake I let all go to loss, and count them as chaff or refuse, that is to say, as things which are purged out, and refused, when a thing is tried and made perfect; that I might win Christ, and might be found in him; not having my righteousness that cometh of the law, but that which cometh of faith in Christ Jesus; which righteousness cometh of God through faith, and is to know him, and the power of his resurrection, how he is Lord over all sin, and the only thing that slays and vanquishes sin; and to know also the fellowship of his passion, that I might be made like unto his death.

So that when righteousness and true merits be tried, we must be content that ours be the chaff, and Christ's the pure corn; ours the scum and refuse, and Christ's the pure gold. And we must fashion ourselves like unto Christ, and take every man his cross, and slay and mortify sin in the flesh, or else we cannot be partakers of his passion. The sin we do before our conversion is forgiven clearly, through faith, if we repent, and submit ourselves to a new life. And the sin we do against our wills, I mean the will of the Spirit, (for after our conversion we have two wills, fighting one against the other,) that sin is also forgiven us through faith, if we repent and submit ourselves to amend. And our diligence in working keeps us from sinning again, and diminishes the sin that remains in the flesh, and makes us pure and less apt and

disposed to sin; and it makes us joyful in adversities, and strong in temptations, and bold to go unto God with a strong and fervent faith in our prayers, and sure that we shall be heard when we cry for help in need, either for ourselves or for our brethren. Now, they that be negligent and sin, are brought in temptation unto the point of desperation, and feel the very pains of hell; so that they stand in doubt whether God has cast them away or no. And in adversity they be sorrowful and discouraged, and think that God is angry, and punishes them for their sins. When a child takes pains to do his father's pleasure, and is sure that he shall have thanks and a reward for his labour, he is happy, and rejoices in the work and pain that he suffers; and so is the adversity of them that keep themselves from sinning. But a child when he is beaten for his fault, or when he thinks his father is angry, and loves him not, is soon desperate and discouraged; so is the adversity of them that are weak, and sin oft. A child that never displeases his father, is bold in his father's presence to speak for himself, or his friend. But he that oft offends, and is corrected or chid, though the peace be made again, yet the remembrance of his offences makes him fearful, and to mistrust, and to think his father would not hear him; so is the faith of the weak that sin oft. But as for them that profess not a new living, however so much they dream of faith, they have no faith at all; for they have no promise, except they be converted to a new life. And therefore in adversities, temptation, and death, they utterly despair of all mercy, and perish.

And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues, and in corners of the streets, that they might be seen of men. Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward. Thou, therefore, when thou prayest, go into thy chamber, and shut thy door, and pray to thy Father which is in secret. And thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

After alms follows prayer. For as it is a christian man's part to help his neighbour, and to bear with him when he is overcharged, and to suffer with him, and to stand one by another, as long as we live here on this earth; even so, because we are ever in such peril and cumbrance that we

cannot rid ourselves out, we must daily and hourly cry to God for aid and succour, as well for our neighbours, as for ourselves.

To give alms, to pray, to fast, or to do any thing at all, whether between thee and God, or between thee and thy neighbour, thou canst never do to please God therewith, except thou hast the true knowledge of God's word to season thy deeds withal. For God hath put a rule in the scripture, without which thou canst not move a hair of thine head, but it is condemnable in the sight of God. As it is of the Jews, though, as Paul beareth them record, they have a fervent zeal to God, yea, and have the scripture thereto; yet because they have not the true understanding, all is damnable that they do. Hypocrites, with scraps of alms, get a hundred fold. And with prayer they get praise, as thou seest here, and pray thereto, and rob widows' houses, as thou readest Matt. xxiii. And with fasting they get fat bellies, full dishes, and ever more than enough! And yet there is no alms, praying, or fasting among them, in the sight of God. With their prayers they exclude all true prayers, and make it impossible that there should be any among them. For prayer is a longing for the honour and name of God, that all men should fear him, and keep his precepts, and believe in him. And, contrary to that, they seek their own honour, that men should fear them, and keep their ordinances, and believe in their sweet blessings, prayers, pardons, and whatsoever they promise. If they bid fast, thou must do it or be damned, and be a heretic and rebellious to holy church. If they dispense, and give thee clean remission to eat flesh on Good Friday, though thou be ever so lusty, thou must obey, or else thou art damned, and a heretic, because thou dost not believe in holy church. Prayer also is to give God thanks for the benefits received. Contrary to which, they will first have thanks of the world for their prayers, and rob not only widows' houses, but also lord, prince, emperor, and all the world, of house and land; yea, and of their wits too. And then they bind God to thank them, and to give them, beside the thanks which they have gotten in the world, not only heaven and a higher place, but that he give heaven to no other man, save through their merits!

Prayer also is a complaining and a showing of thine own misery and necessity, or of thy neighbour's, before God; desiring him, with all the power of thine heart, to have

compassion and to succour. Contrary to this, they have excluded with their prayers all necessity and misery from among them. They are lords over all, and do what they will through the whole world. Kings and emperors are their servants; they need but say the word, and their will is fulfilled. And as for their neighbours, they have no compassion upon them, to bring their complaints before God; but with their prayers they rob them of that little they have, and so make them more miserable.

Of entering into the chamber and shutting the door to.—The meaning is, that we should avoid all worldly praise and profit, and pray with a single eye and true intent according to God's word; and we are not forbidden thereby to pray openly. For we must have a place to come together to pray in general, to thank and to cry to God for common necessities, as well as to preach the word of God in, where the priest ought to pray in the mother tongue, that the name of God may be hallowed, and his word faithfully taught and truly understood, and faith and godly living increased; and for the king and rulers, that God will give them his Spirit, to love the commonwealth; and for peace, that God will defend us from all enemies; for weather and fruits; that God will keep away pestilence and all plagues. And the priest should be an example to the people how they should pray. There are of such things as the priests and others babble, and not pray, many good collects that would much edify the people if they were spoken in the mother tongue. And then, while the priests sing psalms, let every man pray privately, and give God thanks for such benefits as his heart knows he hath received of God, and commend to God his private necessities, and the private necessities of his neighbours, which he knows and is privy to. Neither is there in all such any jeopardy of vain glory. But and if God has given any man the spirit of praying, as all men have not like gifts, that he pray oft and when others do not; then to have a secret place to pray in, both for the avoiding of vain glory, and speech of people, and that thou mayest be free to use thy words as thou pleasest; and whatsoever gestures and behaviours move thee most to devotion, is necessary and good.

And, finally; whatsoever necessity thou hast, though thou feel thyself a great sinner, yet if thine heart be to amend, let not that discourage thee. But go boldly to thy Father seeing thou hast his commandment ever to pray, and his

promise that he will hear thee; not for thy goodness, but of his goodness, and for his truth.

Moreover, when ye pray, babble not much, as the heathen do. For they think that they shall be heard, for their much babbling's sake. Be not, therefore, like unto them. For your Father knoweth of what things ye have need, before ye ask him. Of this manner, therefore, pray ye: Our Father, which art in heaven, honoured be thy name, thy kingdom come. Thy will be fulfilled, even in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive our trespassers. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever. Amen.

As Christ before rebuked their false intent in praying, that they sought praise and profit of that work which ought to be directed to God alone, either to give him thanks, that is to say, to be known, and to confess in the heart that all we have comes of him; or to call upon him for aid and succour in temptations and all necessity; even so here he rebukes a false kind of praying, wherein the tongue and lips labour, and all the body is pained, but the heart talks not with God, nor feels any sweetness at all, nor has any confidence in the promises of God; but trusts in the multitude of words, and in the pain and tediousness of the length of the prayer, as a conjuror in his circles, characters, and in the superstitious words of his conjuration. As ye see now to be among our friars, monks, canons, and nuns, and even throughout all the spiritualty. Which, as I have proved above, have, with their false intent of praying, excluded all occasions, and the whole matter of true prayer, and have turned it into a bodily labour, to vex the tongue, lips, eyes, and throat with roaring, and to weary all the members; so that they say, and may truly swear it, that there is no greater labour in the world than prayer; for no labour, whatsoever it be, when the body is compelled, and the heart unwilling, can be other than grievous and painful. But true prayer, if they complained and sought help either for themselves, or for their neighbours, and trusted in the promise of God, would so comfort the soul and courage the heart, that the body, though it were half dead and more, would revive and be strong again, and the labour would be short and easy. As for an example: if thou wert so

oppressed that thou wert weary of thy life, and wentest to the king for help, and hadst sped, thy spirits would so rejoice that thy body would receive its strength again, and be as fresh as ever it was; even so the promises of God work joy above all measure, where they are believed in the heart.

But our hirelings have not God's word, but trust in the multitude of words, length of babbling, and pain of body, as bond servants. Neither know they any other virtue to be in prayer; as ye may see by the ordinances of all foundations. King Henry the fifth built Sion, and the Charterhouse of Shene, on the other side of the water, of such a manner that lip-labour might never cease. For when the friars of Sion ring out, the nuns begin. And when the nuns ring out of service, the monks on the other side begin. And when they ring out, the friars begin again, and vex themselves night and day, and take pain for God's sake; for which they think God must give them heaven. Yea, and I have known of some ere this, who for very pain and tediousness, have bidden the devil take their founders. They call Lent the holiest time of the year; but wherein is that holiness? verily, in multitude of words, and the tedious length of the service. For let them begin at six, and it will be twelve before they can end. In which time they are so wearied, that by the time they have dined, they have desire for nothing save to sleep. And in the end of all they think no further, than that God must reward their pains. And if you ask how they know it, they will answer; He must reward it, or be unrighteous. Now, God looks not on the pain of the prayer, but on thy faith in his promise and goodness; neither yet on the multitude of thy words, or long babbling. For he knows thy matter better than thou thyself. And though the Jews and the heathen were so foolish, through their unbelief, as to babble many words, yet were they never so mad as to mumble and buz out words that they understood not. Thou wilt say, What matter it if I speak words which I understand not, or if I pray not at all, seeing God knows my matter already? I answer, He will have thee to open thine heart to him, to inform and edify thine ownself. That thou mightest know how all goodness is of him, to put thy trust and confidence in him, and to fly to him in time of need, and to be thankful, and to love him and obey his commandments, and turn and be

converted unto thy Lord God; and not to run wild as the ungodly do, who know not the benefits of God, and therefore are unthankful to obey his commandments.

And that thou mayest know how and what to pray, he gives thee a short instruction and example, saying, After this manner pray:

Our Father, which art in heaven.

First, thou must go to him as a merciful Father, who of his own goodness and fatherly love that he bears to thee, is ready to do more for thee than thou canst desire, though thou have no merits. But he is thy Father, only if thou wilt turn, and henceforth submit thyself to learn to do his will.

Honoured be thy name.

Honoured and praised be thy name; or honoured and praised be thou; for to honour God, and to honour the name of God, is all one. And to honour the name of God is to dread him, to love him, and to keep his commandments. For when a child obeys his father, he honours and praises his father; and when he is rebellious and disobedient, he dishonours his father. This is, then, the understanding and meaning of it: O Father, seeing thou art Father over all, pour out thy Spirit upon all flesh, and make all men to fear, and dread, and love thee, as their Father; and in keeping thy commandments, to honour thee and thy holy name.

Thy kingdom come.

That is, seeing thou art King over all, make all to know thee; and make the kings and rulers, which are but thy substitutes, to command nothing but according to thy word, and to them make all subjects obey.

Thy will be fulfilled in earth, as it is in heaven.

This is all one with that which goes before. Forasmuch, then, as thou art Father and King over all, and all we thy children and brethren among ourselves, make us all as obedient to seek and to do thy will, as the angels do in heaven. Make that no man seek his own will, but all thine. But, and if thou withdraw thine hand to tempt thy children, that the rulers command aught contrary to thy will, then make the subjects to stand fast by thy word,

and to offer themselves to suffer all extremity rather than obey. Finally, when we pray to thee in our temptations and adversities, desiring of thee whatsoever thing it be, and mean truly; yet if thou, who knowest all, seest a better way to thy glory and our profit, then thy will be, and not ours. As thy Son Jesus gave us an example, when he desired, if it had been possible, that the cup of bitter death might have departed from him, saying, Yet not as I will, but as thou wilt.

Give us our daily bread.

By bread is understood all manner of sustenance, in the Hebrew speech; yea, and here is understood thereby, all that pertains unto the necessity of this life. If we have bread, there is dearth of nothing that can pinch, namely, in that land.—Give us our daily bread. Give us all that the necessity of this life daily requires. Give it us day by day, as we need it. We desire not to have store for many years, to exclude all necessity of praying to thee, and to be, as it were, out of thy danger, and to forget thee. But minister it day by day, that we may daily feel thy benefits, and never forget thee. Or, if thou give us abundance, above that we desire, then give us a heart to use it, and to bestow it for the purpose for which thou gavest it, and to deal with our neighbours, and not to love it inordinately; but to think that it is thine, and that thou mayest take it away every hour, and that we be content that thou so do at thy pleasure; and so ever to have it but for daily bread.

Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive our trespassers.

Because Christ knows that our nature is so weak that we cannot but sin daily; therefore he teaches us daily to repent, and to reconcile ourselves together, and daily to ask God forgiveness. Seeing he commanded us to ask, we may be bold so to do, and to believe that he will forgive us. No man, therefore, needs to despair that can repent and ask forgiveness, however deeply he has sinned. And, methinks, if we looked somewhat nearer to this text, we need not make the pope so great a god for his pardons. For Christ, who is a man to be believed, shows us here a more sure way; yea, and that a sensible way, by which we may feel that we are pardoned, and our sins forgiven. We can have no experience of the pope's things, whether they be so or no. He cannot, with all his pardons, deliver

any man out of any purgatory that God puts us unto in this world. He cannot bless, or heal any man so much as of a poor ague, or tooth-ache, which diseases, yet, by his own confession, God puts on us to purge us from sin. But where we cannot see, feel, or have any experience at all that it so is, there is the pope mighty! If I were come home out of a land where never man was before, and were sure never man should come, I might tell as many wonders as master More doth of Utopia, and no man could rebuke me.*

But here, Christ makes thee sure of pardon, for if thou canst forgive thy brother, God has bound himself to forgive thee. What if no man have sinned against thee? That were hard in this life, nevertheless yet, if that profession be in thine heart, that thou knowest it is thy duty to forgive thy brother for thy Father's sake, and art obedient to thy Father's ordinance, and wouldest forgive, if any of thy brethren had offended thee, and asked thee forgiveness; then hast thou that same spirit which God desires to be in thee. Mark what Christ saith above in the beginning of the fifth chapter. Blessed be the merciful, for they shall have mercy. Dost thou pity thy brethren that sin, and doest thy best to amend them, that thy Father's name may be honoured? Then hast thou that, whereby thou art sure of mercy as soon as thou desirest it. And again: Blessed be the peace makers, for they shall be God's children. Lo, if there be any variance among thy brethren, that one have offended the other, do thy best to set them at one, and thou hast the same thing that God desires of thee, and for which he has bound himself to forgive thee.

Lead us not into temptation.

That is, let us not slip out of thy leash,† but hold us fast; give us not up, nor cease to govern us, nor take thy Spirit from us. For as a hound cannot but follow his game when he sees it before him, if he be loose; so can we not but fall into sin when occasion is given us, if thou withdraw thine hand from us. Lead us not into temptation.

* Tindal here refers to a well-known philosophical romance written by More. Sir Thomas More had also written a dialogue against Tindal's translation of the new testament, to which Tindal published an answer.

† A leathern thong, by which a falconer held his hawk, or a person when coursing led his greyhound.

Let no temptation fall upon us greater than thine help in us, but be thou stronger in us, than the temptation thou sendest, or lettest come upon us. Lead us not into temptations: Father, though we be negligent, yea, and unthankful and disobedient to thy true prophets; yet let not the devil loose upon us to deceive us with his false prophets, and to harden us in the way in which we gladly walk; as thou didst Pharaoh, with the false miracles of his sorcerers, and as thine apostle Paul threatens us. (2 Thess. ii.) A little thread holds a strong man where he gladly is. A little pulling draws a man whither he gladly goes. A little wind drives a great ship with the stream. A light persuasion is enough to make a lecherous man believe that fornication is no sin; and an angry man, that it is lawful to avenge himself, and so forth, by all the corrupt nature of man. A little miracle is able to confirm and harden a man in that opinion and faith which his blind reason believes already. A few false miracles were sufficient to persuade the covetousness of Pharaoh, and his greediness to hold the children of Israel in bondage for their service, that thy true miracles showed by Moses for their deliverance, were not of thee, but of the same kind, and done by the same craft, as were the miracles of his sorcerers, and so to harden his heart.

Even so, Father, if thou give us over for our unkindness, seeing the blind nature of man delights in evil, and is ready to believe lies, a little thing is enough to make them that love not to walk in thy truth, and therefore never are able to understand thy Son's doctrine, (John vii.), to believe the feignings of our most holy father, all his superstitious popery and invisible blessings, and to harden them therein. As a stone cast up into the air can neither go any higher, neither yet there abide when the power of the hurler ceases to drive it; even so, Father, seeing our corrupt nature can but go downward only, and the devil and the world drive thereto that same way, how can we proceed further in virtue, or stand therein, if thy power cease in us. Lead us not therefore, O merciful Father, into temptation, nor cease at any time to govern us. Now seeing the God of all mercy, who knows thine infirmity, commands thee to pray in all temptation and adversity, and has promised to help, if thou trust in him; what excuse is it to say, when thou hast sinned, I could not stand of myself; when his power was ready to help thee, if thou hadst asked.

But deliver us from evil.

First, as above, let us not fall into temptation. Secondly, if we be fallen, as who lives and never falls? for never to fall were enough to make a man as evil as Lucifer, and to believe that he stood by his own power;—if therefore we be fallen even to the bottom, howsoever deep it be, put in thine arm after us, for it is long and strong enough, and pluck us out again.

Thirdly, deliver us from evil, and pluck us out of the flesh, and the world, and the power of the devil, and place us in thy kingdom, where we shall be past all jeopardy, and where we cannot sin any more.

For the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, is thine for ever. Amen.

Because thou only art the King, and all others but substitutes; and because all power is thine, and all other men's power but borrowed of thee; therefore ought all honour and obedience to be thine of right, as chief Lord; and none to be given to other men, but only for the office they hold of thee. Neither ought any creature to seek any more in this world than to be a brother, till thou have put him in office; then, if brotherliness will not help, which he ought first to prove, let him execute thy power. Neither may any man take authority of himself, till God have chosen him, that is, till he be chosen by the ordinance that God has set in the world, to rule it.

Finally, no king, lord, master, or what ruler soever he be, has absolute power in this world, and is the very thing which he is called or accounted to be, for then would they cease to be brethren still, neither could they sin, whatsoever it should be they commanded. But now their authority is but a limited power, which, when they transgress, they sin against their brethren, and ought to reconcile themselves to their brethren, and to ask forgiveness, and they are bound to forgive.

Finally, let kings, rulers, and officers remember that God is the true King, and refer the honour that is given to them for their office sake, to him, and humble themselves to him, and acknowledge and confess in their hearts, that they are but brethren, and even no better before God, than the worst of their subjects. Amen.

For if ye forgive men their faults, your heavenly Father shall forgive you also. But, and if ye do not forgive men their faults, no more shall your Father forgive your faults.

This is God's covenant with us, and a confirmation of the petition above rehearsed in the Lord's prayer: Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive our trespassers. If thou wilt enter into the covenant of thy Lord God, and forgive thy brother, then whatsoever thou hast committed against God, if thou repent and ask him forgiveness, thou art sure that thou art so absolved by these words, that none in heaven or earth can bind thee; no, though our most holy father (the pope) curse thee as black as coals, seven foot under the earth, and seven foot above, and cast all his lightning upon thee, to burn thee to powder! Keep the covenant of the Lord thy God therefore, and fear no vain terrors. But and if thou wilt not come within the covenant of God, or if when thou hast professed it, and received the sign thereof, thou cast the yoke of the Lord from off thy neck, be thou sure thou art bound by these words so fast that none in heaven or in earth can loose thee. No, though our earthly god whisper all his absolutions over thee, and claw thee, and stroke thine head with all his sweet blessings.

Furthermore, though forgiveness of thy sins be annexed to thy work, and forgiving thy brother; yet, as I said, thy works do not justify thee before God. But the faith in Christ's blood, and in the promises made to us for his sake, bring righteousness into the heart. And the righteousness of the heart by faith, is felt and known by the work. As Peter, in the first of his second epistle, commands to do good works, for to make our vocation and election sure; that we may feel our faith, and be certified that it is right. For except a man be proved and tried, it cannot be known, either to himself or other men, that he is righteous and in the true faith. Take an example lest thou be beguiled with sophistry; Christ saith, (Matt. xiii.) The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman taketh and hideth in three pecks of meal, till all be leavened or sour. Leaven is sometimes taken in an evil sense, for the doctrine of the pharisees, who corrupted the sweetness of the word of God with the leaven of their glosses; and sometimes in a good sense, for the kingdom of heaven, that is to say, the

gospel and glad tidings of Christ. For as leaven alters the nature of dough, and makes it thoroughly sour, even so the gospel turns a man into a new life and alters him a little and a little, first the heart, and then the members.

Faith in Christ first certifies the conscience of the forgiveness of sins, and delivers us from the fear of everlasting damnation; and then brings the love of God and of his law into the heart, which love is the righteousness of the heart. Love bringeth good works into the members, which works are the outward righteousness, and the righteousness of the members. To hate the will of God is the unrighteousness of the heart, and causes evil works, which are the unrighteousness of the members. As when I hated my brother, my tongue spake evil, my hands smote, and so forth. To love, is the righteousness of the heart, and causes good works, which are the righteousness of the members. As, if I love my brother, and he have need of me, and be in poverty, love will make me put mine hand into my purse or almonry, and to give him somewhat to refresh him, &c. That the love of God and of his commandments is the righteousness of the heart, no man doubts save he that is heartless. And that love springs of faith thou mayest evidently see, 1 John ii. He that loveth his brother dwelleth in the light. But he that hateth his brother, is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and wotteth not whither he goeth, for darkness hath blinded his eyes. Why is he that hateth, in darkness? verily, because he seeth not the love of God in Christ. For if he saw that, he could not but love his brother for so kind a father's sake. If any man hate his brother, be thou sure that the same man is in darkness, and hath not the light of true faith, nor seeth what Christ hath done. If a man so love that he can forgive his brother, assure thyself that he is in the light of the true faith, and seeth what mercy is showed him in Christ.

This is then the sum of all together—Works are the outward righteousness before the world, and may be called the righteousness of the members, and the spring of inward love. Love is the righteousness of the heart, and springeth of faith. Faith is the trust in Christ's blood, and is the gift of God; (Eph. ii.) whereunto a man is drawn of the goodness of God, and driven through true knowledge of the law, and of beholding his deeds in the lust and desire of the members, unto the request of the law, and with

seeing his own condemnation in the glass of the law. For if a man saw his own damnation in the law, he should immediately hate God and his works, and utterly despair; except God offered him Christ, and forgave all that were past; and made him his son, and took the condemnation of the law away; and promised that if he would submit himself to learn and to do his best, that he should be accepted as well as an angel in heaven; and if he fell of frailty, and not of malice and stubbornness, it should be forgiven upon amendment; and that God would ever take him for his son, and only chastise him at home when he did amiss, after the most fatherly manner, and as easily as his disease would suffer, but never bring him forth to be judged after the rigorousness of the law. And as thou couldest not see leaven though thou breakest up a loaf, except thou smelledst or tastedst the sourness, even so couldest thou never see true faith or love, except thou didst see works; and also the intent and meaning of the worker, lest hypocrisy deceive thee.

Our deeds are the effect of righteousness, and thereto an outward testimony and certifying of the inward righteousness, as sourness is of leaven. And when I say, Faith justifieth, the understanding is, that faith receives the justifying. God promises to forgive us our sins, and to impute us for fully righteous. And God justifies us actively; that is to say, forgives us, and reckons us for fully righteous. And Christ's blood deserves it, and faith in the promise receives it, and certifies the conscience thereof. Faith challenges it for Christ's sake, who hath deserved all that is promised; and faith cleaves ever to the promise and truth of the promiser, and pretends not the goodness of her work, but acknowledges that our works deserve it not, but are crowned and rewarded with the deservings of Christ. Take an example of young children: When the father, who promises them a good thing for doing some trifle, delays with them, and when they come for their reward, says, What thou hast done is not worthy half so much; should I give thee so great thing for so little a trifle? They will answer: You promised me; you said I should have it; why did you promise, and why then did you say so? And let him say what he will to drive them off, they will ever say again, You did promise me, so you did; you said I should have it, so you did. But hirelings will pretend their work, and say; I have deserved it; I

have done so much, and so much, and my labour is worth it.

Now at the first covenant making with God, and as oft as we are reconciled, after we have sinned, the righteousness comes of God altogether. But after the atonement is made and we are reconciled, then we are partly righteous in ourselves, and partly unrighteous—righteous as far as we love, and unrighteous as far as the love is imperfect. And faith in the promise of God, that he reckons us for fully righteous, ever supplies that unrighteousness and imperfectness, as it is our whole righteousness at the beginning.

Finally, our works, which God commands, and unto which he annexes his promises that he will reward them, are as it were very sacraments, and visible and sensible signs, tokens, earnest obligations, witnesses, testimonies, and a sure certifying of our souls, that God hath and will do according to his promise, to strengthen our weak faith, and to keep the promise in mind. But they justify us not, no more than the visible works of the sacraments do. As for example, the work of baptism, that outward washing, which is the visible sacrament or sign, justifies us not. But God only justifies us actively, as the cause efficient or workman. God promises to justify whosoever is baptized to believe in Christ, and to keep the law of God, that is to say, to forgive them their former sins, and to impute righteousness unto them; to take them for his sons, and to love them as well as though they were fully righteous. Christ has deserved for us that promise, and that righteousness. And faith receives it, and God gives it, and imputes it to faith, and not to the washing. And the washing testifies it, and certifies us of it, as the pope's letters certify the believers of the pope's pardons. Now the letters help not nor hinder, but the pardons were as good without them, save only to establish weak souls that could not believe except they read the letters, looked on the seal, and saw the print of St. Peter's keys.

Oh! a merciful God, and a most loving Father, how cares he for us! First, above all and beside all his other benefits, to give us his own Son Jesus, and with him to give us himself and all; and not content therewith, but to give us so many sacraments, or visible signs, to excite us and to help our weak faith, and to keep his mercy in mind; as baptism; the sacrament of his body and blood;

and as many other sacraments as they will have if they put significations to them, for we destroy none, but they destroy which have put out the significations, or have feigned some without, such as wedlock, to signify that Christ is the husband, and we his wife and partakers with him, as the wife with her husband, of all his riches, &c. And beyond all those visible sacraments, to give us yet more sensible and surer sacraments, and assurances of his goodness, even in our ownselves; as, if we love and give alms to our neighbour, if we have compassion and pray for him, if we be merciful and forgive him, if we deny ourselves, and fast, and withdraw all pleasures from the flesh for love of the life to come; and to keep the commandments of God. For when such things before were impossible, and now are easy and natural, we feel, and are sure that we are altered, and of a new creature, shapen in righteousness after the image of Christ, and God our Father, seeing his laws of righteousness are written in our hearts.

When ye fast, be not sad, as the hypocrites are. For they fashion them a new countenance, that it might appear unto men how they fast. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. Thou, therefore, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face, that it appear not unto men how thou fastest; but unto thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

As above of alms and prayer; even so here Christ rebukes the false intent and hypocrisy of fasting. That they sought praise of that work which was ordained to tame the flesh, and used such fashions that all the world might know that they fasted, to praise them, and to say, Oh what holy men are these, how pale and pitiful look they, even like death, hanging down their heads, and beholding the earth, as men wholly out of the world! If these come not to heaven, what shall become of us poor wretches of the world? If these be not great in the favour of God, and their prayers be not heard whatsoever they ask, in what case are we lay people? Happy is he that may be a brother among them, and partaker of their prayers and fastings, and other holy living! In an unhappy (in a happy I would say) hour was he born that builds them a cell or a cloister, or gives them a portion of his land to comfort these good men in this painful living, and strait

penance which they have taken upon them! Blessed were he that might kiss the edge of the coat of one of them! Oh! he that might have his body wrapped in one of their old coats at the hour of death, it were as good to him as his christendom,* &c. It appears also by their asking Christ why his disciples fasted not as well as the pharisees, that they oft fasted when the common people fasted not, and all to appear holy. As ours fast in advent, and begin before lent, even at Septuagesima.

And concerning the anointing of thy head, &c. is meant, as before of turning the other cheek, and of that the left hand should not know what the right did—that is, that they should avoid all vain glory, and fast to God, and for the intent that God ordained it for, and that with a joyful heart and cheerful countenance, thereby to feel the working of God, and to be sure of his favour. Such is the meaning, and not to bind them that will fast, to anoint their head and wash their faces. And the manner or phrase of speaking comes of a usage, that was among the Jews, to anoint themselves with sweet and odoriferous anointments when they were disposed to be merry and to make good cheer, as Mary of Bethany poured a box of precious ointment upon Christ's head at supper.

As concerning fasting, it were good that kings and rulers did set an order of soberness among their subjects, to avoid dearth, innumerable diseases, and the great heap of vices that spring of intemperance, and that they forbid not only riot and excess, but also all manner of wanton, delicious, and customable eating and drinking of such things as corrupt the people, and make the men more effeminate than the women, so that there remain no more tokens of a man in them save their beards. Our fashions of eating make us slothful and unlusty to labour and study; unstable, inconstant, and light mannered; full of wits, afterwitted, as we call it, incircumspect, inconsiderate, heady, rash, and hasty to begin unadvisedly, and without casting of perils, the end not considered what may follow, the means not well looked upon, how and by what way the matter may be brought to pass; triflers, mockers, rude, unsavoury, jesters without all manner of salt, and even very apes and marmosets,† and full of wanton and ribald communication and lewd gestures. It corrupts the wit with false judgment, and infects the body with lust, and makes

* Being christened. † A sort of monkey.

the whole man so unquiet in himself, that the body cannot sit still and rest in one place and continue in his work, nor the mind persevere and endure in one purpose.

Let them provide that there be diligent fishing in the sea, and command the sea-coast and towns whither fish may easily come, to fast Friday, Saturday, and Wednesday if need be, and on the Friday to eat no white meat. And let the countries which have no abundance of fish, yet have white meat enough, fast Friday and Saturday from flesh only. And let those countries where scarcity of both is, fast Friday from flesh only, and eat flesh Wednesday and Saturday. But abstain from supper or from dinner, or eat soberly those days. And let them so moderate their fasts that the people may bear it, a provision made for the old, the sick, and feeble, &c. Which fast shall be a temporal thing, for a temporal commonwealth only, and not a service to God.

Then let the priests preach first the law truly, and teach the people to see their sins, and to bring them to repentance: and secondly, the faith of Christ, and the forgiveness of sin through faith: and thirdly, alms, prayer, and fasting, which are the whole life of a christian man, and without which there is no christian man alive. And let them preach the true use of their alms, which is to help thy neighbour with counsel, with body and goods, and all that is in thy power; and the true use of prayer, which is to bring his necessity and thine own before God, with a strong faith in his promises; and the true use of fasting, which is to tame the flesh unto the spirit, that the soul may attend to the word of God and pray through faith.

By these three we keep the Spirit of God, and both continue and also grow in righteousness, and wax more and more perfect in soul and body. And if these fail, or we understand not the right intent, we lose the Spirit again, and the righteousness of faith, and the true understanding of the scripture, and all our learning will be but pure darkness. And then what a blindness is that, when the darkness of hell is called the light of heaven!

As it is of alms and prayer, so it is of fasting; judge alike of all three. Where any one of them is, there are they all three; and where any one is away, there is none at all. We must have the profession of all three ever written in our hearts. I must ever love my neighbour, and be ready to help, and when occasion is offered, then

do it. I ought to consider and know that all comes of God, and to acknowledge that same to him in mine heart. And whatsoever we need, we ought to know, that we must receive that of God, and therefore ever call to him with a strong faith. Even so I must ever fight against my flesh, and therefore ever withdraw from it all that moves it to rebel against the Spirit.

So now fasting stands not in eating and drinking only, and much less in flesh alone. But in abstinence from all that moves the flesh against the Spirit, as long sleeping, idleness, and filthy communication, and all worldly talking, as of covetousness and promotion, and such like; and wanton company, soft clothes, and soft beds, and so forth, which are that right hand and right eye that must be cut off and plucked out, that the whole man perish not. And as you can put no general rule of alms or prayer, no more can you of fasting. But I must be always ready to cut off whatsoever I perceive strengthens the flesh against the spirit. And I must have a diligent eye to the flesh and its complexion, and if aught escape me in word or deed, seek whence the occasion came, and at once cut off that right hand, and pluck out that eye.

If this fast be truly preached, then is fasting good, and not otherwise but for making of hypocrites; as Christ would not let his disciples fast before they were learned, lest they should thereby have been no better than the pharisees. And then the outward fasting, ordained by the temporal rulers, helps much, for the weak's sake. Yea, and though the land were so plenteous, that it needed not to command such fast for to avoid dearth, yet they ought to set such up, because of them that cannot rule themselves; for whose sake they ought to forbid excess in taverns, and alehouses, and rioting out of season. For if the people could rule themselves, what need rulers! Moreover, if any man privately show the priest his infirmities, and the priest see any manner of abstinence or chastising apt for the person, let him counsel him to do it for the subduing of the flesh, and not command as a tyrant under pain of damnation and to make satisfaction. Thus let him say: Brother or sister, ye are bound under pain of deadly sin, to tame your flesh by some manner of way, that ye sin not against God; and I know no better than this: my counsel and my desire therefore is, that ye use this either till ye have no more need, or till God show you some better, &c. And let the elders

consider diligently the course of their youth, and with wisdom, counsel, and discreet governance, help the younger to avoid the perils and jeopardies which they have learned by their own experience to be in that dangerous journey.

Moreover, when the people be fallen from their profession and from the law; as it shall be impossible for the preacher to keep the great multitude together, if the temporal sword be slack and negligent in punishing open offences, (as they ever have and will be, save in those points only wherein lies the pith of their own profit and advantage, and the weight of their honour and maintenance of their dignities,) as when God also, as his promise is, hath brought upon them the curses of the law —hunger, dearth, battle, pestilence, and all manner of plagues, with all misfortune and evil luck. Then let the true preachers be importunate, and show the people the causes of their misery, and wretched adversity; and expound the law to them, and bring them to the knowledge of their sins; and so bind their consciences and draw them to repentance, and to the appointment and covenant of the Lord again. As many holy prophets, priests, and kings, in the old testament, called the people back, and brought them again in time of adversity unto the appointment of the Lord. And the priest, prophet, or king, in God's stead, smote hands with them, and took an oath of them, to be the Lord's people, and to turn again to the Lord's covenant, to keep his law and to believe in his promises. And God immediately withdrew his hand and rid them out of all captivity and danger, and became as merciful as ever before.

But we christians have been very seldom or never called again to the covenant of the Lord, the law of God, and faith of Christ; but often to the covenant of the pope. As he now clucketh apace for his chickens, and will both prove all his old policies, and seek and imagine new practices. And if the people come again, let the priest or bishop, after the example of the prophets and high priests of the Israelites, take an oath in God's stead of the king and lords. And let the king and lords receive an oath of the people, and follow the example of the Ninevites in fasting and praying.

Some men will say, Seeing fasting is to withdraw all pleasures from the body and to punish the flesh, then God delights in our pains taking, &c. I answer, God delights in true obedience and in all that we do at his commandment, and for the intent that he commands it. If thou love and

pity thy neighbour and help him, thy alms are acceptable. If thou do it of vain glory, to have the praise that belongs to God, or for a greater profit only, or to make satisfaction for thy past sins, and to dishonour Christ's blood, which hath made it already; then thine alms are abominable. If thy prayer be thanks in heart, or calling to God for help, with trust in him according to his promise, then thy prayer pleases. If thou believe in Christ's blood for the remission of sins, and henceforth hatest sin, that thou punishest thy body to flee thy lusts, and to keep them under that thou sin not again, then it pleases God exceedingly. But and if thou think that God delights in the work for the work itself, the true intent being away, and in thy pain, for thy pain itself, thou art as far out of the way as from heaven to the earth. If thou wouldest kill thy body, or, when it is tame enough, pain it further so that thou wert not able to serve God and thy neighbour, according to the room and estate thou art in, thy sacrifice were quite without salt, and altogether unsavoury in the taste of God, and thou mad and out of thy wits. But and if thou trust in thy work, then art thou abominable.

Now let us look on the pope's fast. First, the intent should be to tame thy lusts, not lechery only, but pride chiefly, wrath, malice, hate, envy, and covetousness, and to keep the law of God, and therefore it stands not in meat and drink only. But how they keep God's law, compare it to their deeds and thou shalt see! Secondly, the fast of the old law was, to put on mourning clothes, as hair or sack, and neither to eat nor drink until night, and all the while to pray, and to do alms-deeds and show mercy And at even they ate flesh and what God gave, soberly, and as little as would sustain the body, &c. The pope's fast is commonly only to eat no flesh. I say not, look how lean they be, but consider what a taming of the flesh it is, to eat ten or twenty manner of fishes drest after the costliest manner, and to sit a couple of hours, and to pour in of the best wine and ale that may be gotten! And at night to banquet with dew, (as they say) of all manner of fruits and confections, marmalade, succades, greenginger, comfits, sugarplate, with malmsey and romney burnt with sugar, cinnamon and cloves, with bastard, muscadell, and hipocrassy, &c. Think ye not that such dews, with drinking, a piece of salt-fish or a pickerel, tame the body exceedingly!

Furthermore that the true intent is away both from their fasting and prayers, is evident; first by the multiplying of

them, for when the Jews had lost the understanding of their sacrifices, and believed in the work, then they were mad upon them, so that well was he that could rob himself to offer most; insomuch that the prophets cried out against them, that their offerings stank before God. And ours had so multiplied their fasting that they could no longer bear them. At the beginning they were bearable for the advantage: but when they had purchased enough and enough again, they became intolerable. And therefore all our monks, whose profession was never to eat flesh, set up the pope, and took dispensations, both for that fast, and also for their strait rules, and made their strait rules as wide as the hoods of their cowls. As the hypocrisy of the fraitry where they eat but invisible flesh, or that which is interpreted to be no flesh, is spoken of in other places. Another proof is, that they so long a time have given pardons of the merits of their fasting, as though they had done more than enough for themselves, and of that merchandise have gotten all they have, and have brought the knowledge of Christ's blood clean into darkness. And last of all, what shall I say of the open idolatry of innumerable fasts; of St. Brandon's fast, St. Patrick's fast, of four holy Fridays, of St. Anthony's, between St. Mary's days, of our Lady fast, either fasting once in seven years, the same day that her day falls on in March, and then begin, or one year with bread and water, and all for what purpose ye know well enough; and of such like things, I know ten thousand in the world. And who has rebuked them?

See that ye gather not treasure upon the earth, where rust and moths corrupt, and where thieves break up and steal. But gather you treasure in heaven, where neither rust nor moths corrupt, and where thieves neither break up nor steal. For where your treasure is, there will be your hearts also.

Note the goodly order of Christ's preaching. First, he restored the true understanding of the law, then the true intent of the works. And here, consequently, he rebukes the mortal foe and sworn enemy, both of true doctrine and true living, which is covetousness—the root of all evil, saith Paul. (1 Tim. vi.) Covetousness is image service. (Col. iii.) It makes men to err from the faith. (1 Tim. vi.) It has no part in the kingdom of Christ and God. (Eph. v.) Covetousness hardened the heart of Pharaoh that the faith of the miracles of God could not sink into it. Covetousness

made Balaam, who knew all the truth of God, to hate it, and to give the most pestilent and poisonous counsel against it, that heart could imagine, even to destroy it if it had been possible. Covetousness taught the false prophets in the old testament to interpret the law of God falsely, and to pervert the meaning and intent of all the sacrifices and ceremonies, and to slay the true preachers that rebuked them.

And with their false persuasions they led all the kings of Israel out of the right way, and the most part of the kings of Judah also. And Peter, in the second chapter of his second epistle, prophesies that there should be false teachers among us, that should follow the way of Balaam; that is, for covetousness persecute the truth, and through covetousness with feigned words make merchandise of the people, and bring in damnable sects too. And here you have an infallible rule, that where covetousness is, there is no truth; no, though they call themselves the church, and say thereto that they cannot err. Covetousness kept Judas still in unbelief, though he saw and did also many miracles in the name of Christ, and compelled him to sell him to the scribes and pharisees; for covetousness is a merciless thing. Covetousness made the pharisees to lie on Christ, to persecute him, and falsely to accuse him. And it made Pilate, though he found Christ to be innocent, yet to slay him. It caused Herod to persecute Christ yet in his cradle. Covetousness makes hypocrites persecute the truth against their own consciences, and to lie to princes that the true preachers move sedition, and make their subjects to rise against them; and covetousness makes the princes to believe their wicked persuasions, and to lend their swords to shed innocent blood.

Finally, covetousness makes many, whom the truth pleases at the beginning, to cast it up again, and to be afterwards the most cruel enemies thereof, after the example of Simon Magus. (Acts viii.) Paul bids Timothy to charge the rich to believe in the living God, and not in their uncertain riches, for it is impossible for a covetous idolater, or image server, that trusts in the dead god of his riches, to put his trust in the living God.

One misery is, that they which here gather and lay up, cannot tell for whom. Another is, rust, canker, moths, and a thousand misfortunes besides, thieves, extortioners, oppressors, and mighty tyrants, to which the rich are ever

a prey. And though they prosper to the end outwardly, yet fear ever gnaws their hearts inwardly. And at the hour of death they know and feel that they have gathered nought, and then they sorrow, and are like one that dreams of riches, and in the morning when he finds nought, he is heavy, and sorry for the remembrance of the pleasant dream. And finally when they are most loth to die, and hope to live long, then they perish suddenly, after the example of that rich man who intended to make him larger barns and storehouses. Happy, therefore, is he that lays up treasure in heaven, and is rich in faith and good works; for the reward thereto promised, God shall keep sure for him; no man can take it away. Here is not forbidden to have riches; but to love it, to trust in it, and to be careful for it. For God has promised to care for us, and to give us enough, and to keep that which is gotten, if we will care to keep his commandments. Whatsoever office or degree thou art in in this world, do the duty of thine office diligently, and trust in God, and let him care. If thou art a husbandman, plow, and sow, and till thy ground, and let God alone for the rest; he will care to make it grow plenteously, and to send seasonable weather to have it in, and will provide thee a good market to sell, &c.

In like manner, if thou be a king, do the office of a king, and receive the duties of the king, and let God care to keep thee in thy kingdom. His favour shall do more for thee than a thousand millions of gold, and so of all others. He that hath but a little, and is sure that God shall keep both him and it, is richer than he which hath thousands, and hath none other hope than that he and it must be kept by his own care and policy.

And, finally, mark one point in Luke xiv. Christ says, None of them that refuseth not all that he possesseth can be my disciple; that is, he that casts not away the love of all worldly things, can be no scholar of Christ's to learn his doctrine. Then he adds, that salt is good; but if the salt be unsavoury, or has lost its virtue, what can be seasoned therewith? Verily, nothing. Now, by salt is understood the doctrine; and the meaning is, if ye be covetous and love worldly things, it will corrupt the salt of your doctrine, so that whatsoever you powder therewith, it shall be more unsavoury than before.

Where your treasure is, there are your hearts. If your

treasure be in the world, so is the love of your hearts. And if ye love the world, and the things of the world, the love of God is not in you; and the love of God is the love of his commandments; and he that loveth not God's commandments will never preach them truly, because he loves them not; but he will corrupt them with glosses, that they may stand with that which his heart loves, and until they have another sense than ever God gave them. Therefore, no covetous person can be a true prophet. It is not for nought, then, that Christ so often and so diligently warns his disciples to beware of covetousness, as of that thing which he knew well had ever corrupted the word of God, and ever should.

The light of thy body is thine eye; wherefore, if thine eye be single, all thy body shall be full of light. But and if thine eye be wicked, then shall thy whole body be dark. If, therefore, the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness.

Note the conclusion with a proper similitude. The eye is the light of the body; and by the light of the eye all other members see and are governed. As long as the eye seeth, hand and foot do their duties, neither is there any fear that a man should stumble or fall into fire or water. But if the eye be blind, all the body is blind; and that so blind, that there is no remedy at all; set a candle before him, he sees not; give him a lantern in his hand, and yet he goes not straight. Bring him out into the sun, and point him unto that which thou wouldest have him see, it matters not. Even so, if covetousness have blinded the spiritual eye, and perverted the right intent of the law of God, and of the works commanded by God, and of the sacrifice, ceremonies, and sacraments, and of all other ordinances of God, for which intent is the spiritual eye, then is all the doctrine dark, and very blindness. Yea, and then how dark is the darkness, when that which is pure blindness is believed to be light! How dark is the doctrine of them who teach that a man may compel God with the works of freewill to give him his favour and grace, or make God unrighteous! How dark is the doctrine of them, who, to the rebuke of Christ's blood, teach that works do justify before God, and make satisfaction for sins! How blind are they which think prayer to be the pattering of many words, and will therefore not only be praised and

paid of the world, but also by the title thereof challenge heaven, and not by the merits of Christ's blood! How dark is the doctrine of them whose faith is only, and altogether, in appointments which they themselves have feigned between them and God, unto which God never subscribed; in which, also, they assign what work, and how much they will do, and what reward, and how great, God must give them; or choose whether he will be unrighteous.

How dark is the doctrine of them that say stiffly, that the work of the sacraments in itself justifies, not referring it to stir up the faith of the promises annexed to them; and affirm, that bodily pain, for the pain itself, not referring it either to the love of the law of God or of their neighbour, pleases God! How dark, damnable, and devilish, is the doctrine of them, who not only think lucre to be the service of God, but also are so far past all shame, that they affirm they are the holy church and cannot err; and all that they decree must be an article of our faith, and that it is damnable once to doubt or search the scripture whether their doctrine will thereto agree or no; but say their decrees must be believed as they sound, how contrary soever the scripture be; and that the scripture must be expounded and made to agree to them! They need not to regard the scripture, but to do and say as *their* holy ghost moves them; and if the scripture be contrary, then they make it a nose of wax, and wrest it this way and that way till it agree.

Faith of works was the darkness of the false prophets, out of which the true could not draw them. Faith of works was the blindness of the pharisees, out of which neither John Baptist nor Christ could bring them. And though John Baptist piped to them with invincible reasons of the scripture, and Christ thereto added miracles, yet the pharisees would not dance. For John Baptist, as they thought, was too mad to live so strait a life, and to refuse to be justified thereby. And as for Christ and his disciples, the pharisees were much holier themselves, fasted oftener, and prayed thicker; yea, and uttered many more words in their prayers than they. Faith of works is that belief of the Turks and Jews, which drives them ever away from Christ. Faith of works has been that light of darkness, in which a great part of those called christians have walked ever since Pelagius and Faustus, now about

twelve hundred years, and ever more and more; and in which all our religious have walked all, and more, for this four or five hundred years; and in which the priests also have walked a long season: the Lord bring them out again.

Finally, how dark is the darkness, when a pharisee and a very pelagian stands up, and preaches against the pharisees and the pelagians, and is allowed of all the audience! And in conclusion, when the world, ever since it began, has and does of natural blindness believe in their own works; then if the scripture be perverted to confirm that error, how sorely are their hearts hardened, and how deep is that darkness!

No man can serve two masters: for he shall either hate the one, and love the other; or cleave to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Mammon is riches or abundance of goods. And Christ concludeth with a plain similitude, that as it is impossible to serve two contrary masters, and as it is impossible to be retained unto two divers lords, which are enemies one to the other, so is it impossible to serve God and mammon. Two masters of one mind, and one will, a man might serve: for if one will, one mind, and one accord be in twenty, then are they all but one master. And two masters, where one is under the other or a substitute, a man may serve. For the service of the inferior is the commandment of the superior. As to serve and obey father, mother, husband, master, and lord, is God's commandment. But if the inferior be of a contrary will to the superior, and command any contrary thing, then mayest thou not obey. For then they are two contrary masters. So God and mammon are two contrary masters; yea, two contrary gods, and of contrary commandments.

God saith, I thy Lord God am but one, and me shalt thou serve alone; that is, Thou shalt love me with all thine heart, or with thine whole heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy might. Thou shalt neither serve, obey, nor love any thing save me and what I bid thee; and that as far and no further than I bid thee.

And mammon saith the same. For mammon will be a god also, and served and loved alone.

God saith, See thou love thy neighbour, that thou labour

with thine hands to get thy living and somewhat above to help him.

Mammon saith, He is called thy neighbour, because he is nigh thee. Now who is so nigh thee as thyself; therefore love thyself, and make ignorant and vile wretches to labour diligently to get thee as much as thou mayest, and some scraps above for themselves. Or wilt thou be perfect? Then disguise thyself and put on a grey coat, a black or a pied, and give thyself to devotion, despise the world and take a covetous, I would say a contemplative, life upon thee. Tell the people how hot purgatory is, and what pains there must be suffered for small faults. And then give mercifully a thousand fold for one, spiritual for temporal; give heaven, and take but house and land, and foolish temporal things.

God saith, Judge truly between thy brethren, and therefore take no gifts.

Mammon saith, It is good manners and a point of courtesy to take that which is offered. And he that gives to thee, loves thee better than such a churl that gives thee nought, yea and thou art more bound to favour his cause.

God saith, Sell and give alms.

Mammon saith, Lay up to have enough to maintain thine estate, and to defend thee from thine enemies, and to serve thee in thine age, &c.

Forasmuch then as God and mammon be two so contrary masters, that whosoever will serve God, must give up mammon, and all that will serve mammon, must forsake God; it follows that they which are the sworn servants of mammon, and have his spirit, and are his faithful church, are not the true servants of God, nor have his Spirit of truth in them, nor can be his true church.

Moreover, seeing that God and mammon be so contrary, that God's word is death in mammon's ear, and his doctrine poison in mammon's mouth; it follows that if the ministers of God's word do favour mammon, they will so fashion their speech, and so sound their words, that they may be pleasant in the ears of mammon.

Finally, Only to have riches, is not to be the servant of mammon, but to love it and cleave to it in thine heart. For if thou have goods only to maintain the office which God has put thee in, and of the rest to help thy neighbour's need, so art thou lord over thy mammon and not his servant. Of them that are rich, how shalt thou know

the master of mammon from the servant? verily, first by the getting; secondly, when his poor neighbour complains, if he be mammon's servant, mammon will shut up his heart and make himself without compassion. Thirdly, the cross of Christ will try them the one from the other. For when persecution arises for the word, then will the true servant of Christ bid mammon adieu. And the faithful servant of mammon will utter his hypocrisy, and not only renounce the doctrine of Christ, but also be a cruel and a sharp persecutor thereof, to put away all surmise, and that his fidelity to his master mammon may openly appear.

Therefore I say unto you, Care not for your lives what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; neither for your bodies what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body more than the raiment?

He that buildeth a costly house, even to the tiling, will not leave off there, and lose so great cost for so small a trifle more. No more will He that gave thee so precious a soul, and so beautiful a body, let either of them perish again before the day, for so small a thing as food or raiment. God never made mouth but he made meat for it, nor body but he made raiment also. Howbeit, mammon blinds our eyes, so that we can neither see nor judge aright.

Behold the fowls of the air, how they sow not, neither reap, nor gather into storehouses; and yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. And are not ye far better than they? Which of you with taking thought is able to put one cubit unto his stature?

He that cares for the least of his creatures will much more care for the greatest. The birds of the air, and the beasts, all preach to us that we should leave caring, and put our trust in our Father. But mammon has made us so dull and so entirely without capacity, that no example or argument, be it ever so vehement, can enter our understandings, to make us see or judge aright. Finally, What a madness it is to take so great thought for food or raiment, when the wealth, health, life of thy body, and altogether are out of thy power! If all the world were thine, thou couldest not make thyself one inch longer, nor that thy stomach shall digest the meat that thou puttest into it.

No, thou art not sure that what thou puttest into thy mouth shall go through thee, or whether it shall choke thee. Thou canst not make certain when thou liest or sittest down that thou shalt rise again, or when thou sleepest that thou shalt awake again, or that thou shouldest live one hour longer. So that he which cared for thee when thou couldest not care, must care for thee still, or else thou shouldest perish. And he will not care for thee to thy soul's profit, if thou mistrust him and care for thyself.

And for raiment why take ye thought? Behold the lilies of the field how they grow; they labour not, neither spin. And yet I say to you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not apparelled like one of them. Wherefore, if the grass which is to day in the fields, and to-morrow shall be cast into the furnace, God so clothe, how much more shall he do the same unto you, O ye of little faith?

Not only fowls and beasts, but also trees, herbs, and all the flowers of the earth do cry unto us, to trust God, and to cast away all care that is coupled with covetousness, for more than sufficient to bear the charges which we have in our hands, by the reason of the state we are in the world; and all care that is annexed with mistrust, that God will not minister enough to bear all our charges. If we endeavour ourselves to keep his commandments, and to do every man the office he is in truly, and, if when God, to prove us, suffers us to have need of our neighbours, we first complain to God, and desire him to prepare the hearts of our neighbours against we come to desire their help.

But mammon pipes another song, saying; If thou shouldest make no other manner of labour for a benefice, than as if thou caredst not whether thou hadst it or hadst it not, it would be long ere thou got one, all would be taken out of thine hand. I answer, As thy labour was to get it, such shall be thy behaviour in it; as thou flatteredst to have it, so shalt thou in it. And as thou boughtest and soldest to get it, so shalt thou sell in it to buy favour and to be set by in the world. If thy principal intent that thou seekest a benefice for, be lucre, then take heed to the example of thy forefather Simon Magus. Let thy care therefore be to do the office that God puts thee in truly, and the blessing that he gives therewith, that take with thanks, and neither care nor covet farther.

Take no thought therefore, saying: What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or what shall we put on? all these things the heathen seek. Yea, and your heavenly Father knoweth that ye need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof, and all these things shall be ministered unto you.

Be not like the heathen which have no trust in God nor his word, nor believe any life to come. Let them vex themselves, and each be a devil to the other for worldly things, but comfort thou thyself with the hope of a better life in another world, ever be assured that thou shalt have sufficient here, only if thou keep covenant with the Lord thy God, and seek his kingdom and the righteousness thereof above all things. The kingdom of God is the gospel and doctrine of Christ. And the righteousness thereof is to believe in Christ's blood for the remission of sins. Out of which righteousness springs love to God, and thy neighbour for his sake, which is also righteousness as I have said afore, so far as it is perfect, and that which lacketh is supplied by faith in God's word, in that he has promised to accept that till more come. Then follows the outward righteousness of works, by the which, and diligent recording of God's word together, we grow and wax perfect, and keep ourselves from going back and losing the Spirit again.

And these have our spiritualty with their corrupt doctrine mingled together; that is to say, the righteousness of the kingdom of God, which is faith in Christ's blood, and the outward righteousness of the members, so that we ascribe to the one what pertains to the other. Seek the kingdom of heaven therefore, and the righteousness of the same, and be sure thou shalt ever have sufficient, and these things shall be ministered unto thee; that is to say, shall come of their own accord, by the promise of God, yea Christ promised thee a hundred fold even in this life, of all that thou leavest for his sake. If that were true, some would say, who would not rather serve him than mammon? yet is it true; for first, if thou be servant of mammon, thou must keep thy god, and thy god not thee. And every man that is stronger than thou, will take thy god from thee. Moreover God will take either thee from thy mammon, or thy mammon from thee, ere thou wouldest; to avenge himself of thy blind unkindness, that

when he hath made thee, and given thee all, thou didst forsake him and serve his mortal enemy. But if thou follow Christ, all the world, and let them take all the devils in hell to them, shall not be able to disappoint thee of a sufficient living. And though they persecute thee from house to house a thousand times, yet shall God provide thee another, with all things sufficient to live by. Now compare the surety of this with the uncertainty of the other; and then the blessed end of this (that heaven is promised thee also) with the miserable departing from the other so sorely against thy will, and then the desperation that thy heart feels that thou art already in hell. And then may not this be well called a thousand fold more than the other?

Care not then for the day following; but let the day following care for itself. For the day that is present hath ever enough of his own trouble.

If thou look well on the covenant that is between thee and thy Lord God on the one side, and on the temptations of the world, the flesh, and Satan on the other, thou shalt soon perceive that the day present hath ever enough to be cared for, and for which thou must cry earnestly to God for help also, though thou do thy best. Now then, seeing the day present is overcharged with her own care, what madness is it to lade upon her also the care of the day following, yea, the care of a year, yea, of twenty years, or as though thou never intendest to die, and to torment and vex the soul through mistrust and unbelief, and to make thy life sour and bitter, and as unquiet as the life of the devils in hell?

Therefore care, day by day, and hour by hour earnestly, to keep the covenant of the Lord thy God, and to record therein day and night, and to do thy part unto the uttermost of thy power. And as for God's part, let him care for it himself, and believe thou his words steadfastly, and be sure that heaven and earth shall sooner perish, than one jot bide behind of that which he hath promised. And for thine own part also, care not of that manner, as though thou shouldest do all alone. Nay, God hath first promised to help thee, and secondly, to accept thine heart, and the little that thou art able to do, be it ever so imperfect. Thirdly, though wind, weather, and the stream carry thee quite contrary to thy purpose, yet because thou bidest still

in thy profession, ready to turn to the right course as soon as the tempest is a little overblown, God promises to forgive that, and not the less to fulfil his promises of one jot.

Does Christ so defend his, that they never come into danger of trouble? Yes, they come into such straits oft, that no wit nor reason can see any way out, save faith only is sure that God hath, and will make a way through. But that temptation is but for an hour to teach them, and to make them feel the goodness of their Father, and the passions of their brethren, and of their Master Christ also. It is but as a loving mother, to make her child to perceive and feel her kindness, to love her again and be thankful, lets it hunger in a morning, and when it calls for its breakfast, makes as though she heard it not, till for pain and impatience it begins to cry a good. And then she stilleth it and gives it all it asks, and more too, to please it. And when it is appeased and begins to eat, and rejoices and is glad and fain, she asks, Who gave thee that? thy mother: and it saith, Yea. Then saith she: Am not I a good mother that gives thee all things? and it answers, Yea. And she asks: Wilt thou love thy mother? &c. and it saith, Yea. And so it comes to the knowledge of its mother's kindness, and is thankful. Such is the temptation of Christ's elect, and otherwise not.

Here is not forbidden all manner of care, but that worldly and devilish care that springs of an inordinate love to worldly things, and of mistrust in God. As, for an example, I covet inordinately more than sufficient or than I have need of. And because I mistrust God, and have no hope in him, and therefore pray not to him, it comes not. Then I mourn, sorrow, and pine away, and am wholly unquiet in mine heart. Or whether I have too much, or but sufficient, and love it inordinately, then I care for the keeping. And because I mistrust God, and have no hope in him that he will help me; therefore, when I have locked doors, chambers, and coffers, I am never the nearer at rest, but care still, and cast in my mind a thousand perils, of which the most part were not in my power to avoid, though I never slept. And where this care is, there the word of God can have no resting-place, but is choked up as soon as it is sown.

But there is another care that springs out of the love of God, for every love hath her care, and it is a care to keep God's commandments. This care must every man have,

For a man lives not by bread only, but much more by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. The keeping of God's commandment is the life of a man, as well in this world as in the world to come; as, Children obey father and mother, that thou mayest long live on the earth. And by father and mother is understood all rulers; whom, if thou obey, thy blessing shall be long life; and contrary if thou disobey, short life: and shalt either perish by the sword, or by some other plague, and that shortly. And even so shall the ruler, if he rule not as God hath commanded. Oppress thou a widow and fatherless children, saith God, and they shall cry to me, and I will hear their voice, and then will my wrath wax hot; so I will smite you with the sword, and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.

Some will say, I see none prosper more, or continue longer, than those that are the most cruel tyrants. What then? Yet say I that God abideth ever true; for where he setteth up a tyrant, and continueth him in prosperity, it is to be a scourge to wicked subjects that have forsaken the covenant of the Lord their God. And unto them his good promises pertain not, save his curses only. But if the subjects would turn and repent, and follow the ways of God, he would shortly deliver them. Howbeit, yet where the superior corrupts the inferior, which else is disposed enough to goodness, God will not let them long continue.

AN EXPOSITION OF THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Judge not, that ye be not judged. For as ye judge, so shall ye be judged. And with what measure ye mete, with the same shall it be measured to you again. Why lookest thou on the mote that is in thy brother's eye, and markest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how canst thou say to thy brother, Let me pluck out the mote out of thine eye, and, behold, there is a beam in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, pluck first the beam out of thine own eye; and then thou shalt see clearly to pluck the mote out of thy brother's eye.

This is not meant of temporal judgment, for Christ forbad not that, but often did establish it, as do Peter and

Paul in their epistles also. Nor is here forbidden to judge those deeds which are manifestly against the law of God, for those ought every christian man to persecute; yet must they do it after the order that Christ hath set. But when he saith, Hypocrite, cast out first the beam that is in thine own eye, it is easy to understand what manner of judging he means.

The hypocrites will have fastings, prayings, kneeling, crouching, ducking, and a thousand ceremonies of their own invention. And whosoever does not as they do, him they count a damned soul. To Christ they say, Why fast not thy disciples, as the pharisees do? Why pluck they the ears of corn and rub them in their hands, (though they did it when compelled with pure hunger,) and do that which is not lawful on the Sabbath-day? Why break ye the traditions of our elders, and wash not when ye sit down to meat? Yea, and why dost thou thyself heal the people upon the holy day? Why didst thou not only heal him that was bedridden thirty-eight years, but also badest him bear away his bed upon the Sabbath-day? Be there not working days sufficient to do good deeds to the praise of God, and the profit of thy neighbour, but that thou must break thy Sabbath-day? He cannot but be a damned person that breaks the holy day, and despises the ordinance of the holy church!

He eats butter on Fridays without a dispensation of our holy father the pope; yea, and cake-bread, made with milk and eggs too, and white meat in Lent; he takes no holy water when he comes to the church; he hears no mass from Sunday to Sunday. And either he has no beads at all, or else you shall not hear a stone clink in his hand, nor yet his lips wag all the time of mass and matins, &c.—O hypocrite! cast out first the beam that is in thine own eye, and then thou shalt see better. Thou understandest all God's laws falsely, and therefore thou keepest none of them truly; his laws require mercy, and not sacrifice. Moreover, thou hast a false intent in all the works that thou doest, and therefore they are all damnable in the sight of God. Hypocrite! cast out the beam that is in thine own eye, learn to understand the law of God truly, and to do thy works aright, and for the intent that God ordained them. And then thou shalt see whether thy brother have a mote in his eye or not, and if he have, how to pluck it out, and else not.

For he that knows the intent of the law and of works, though he observe a thousand ceremonies for his own exercise, he shall never condemn his brother, or break unity with him, in those things which Christ never commanded, but left indifferent. Or if he see a mote in his brother's eye, that he observes not with his brethren some certain ordinance made for a good purpose, because he knows not the intent; he will pluck it out fair and softly, and instruct him lovingly, and make him well content. Which thing, if our spiritualty would do, men would not so abhor to obey their tyranny. But they are hypocrites, and do and command all their works for a false purpose, and therefore judge, slay, and shed their brethren's blood mercilessly. God is the Father of all mercy, and therefore gave not hypocrites such absolute power to compel their brethren to obey what they list, or to slay them without pity, showing either no cause of their commandments at all, but, So will we have it! or else assigning an intent damnable, and contrary to all scripture. Paul (Rom. xiv.) saith to them that observed ceremonies, that they should not judge them that did not; for he that observes and knows not the intent, judges at once; and to them that observed not, that they should not despise them that observed; he that observes not, ought not to despise the weakness or ignorance of his brother, till he perceive that he is obstinate and will not learn.

Moreover, such measure as thou givest, thou shalt receive again; that is, if thou judge thy neighbour, God shall judge thee; for if thou judge thy neighbour in such things, thou knowest not the law of God, nor the intent of works, and art therefore condemned of God, &c.

Give not that which is holy unto dogs, neither cast your pearls before the swine, lest they tread them under their feet, and the other turn again and all to tear you.

The dogs are those obstinate and hardened, who, for the blind zeal of their leaven, wherewith they have soured both the doctrine and also the works, maliciously resist the truth, and persecute the ministers thereof; and are those wolves among which Christ sends his sheep, warning them not only to be single and pure in their doctrine, but also wise and circumspect, and to beware of men. For they should bring them before judges and kings, and slay them, thinking to do God service therein; that is, as Paul to the

Romans testifies of the Jews, for blind zeal to their own false and feigned righteousness, they persecuted the righteousness of God.

The swine are they, who, for all they have received the pure gospel of Christ, will yet continue still in sin, and roll themselves in the puddle and mire of their old filthy conversation; and both before the ignorant, and also the weak, use the uttermost of their liberty, interpreting it after the largest fashion, and most favour of the flesh, as it were the pope's pardon, and therewith make the truth evil spoken of, so that thousands who else might have been easily won, will now not once hear thereof; and stir up cruel persecution, which else would be much easier, yea, and sometimes none at all. And yet will those swine, when it comes to the point, abide no persecution at all; but offer themselves willing, even at the first chop, to deny ere they be scarcely apposed of their doctrine.* Therefore, lay first the law of God before them, and call them to repentance. And if thou see no hope of mending in them, cease there and go no farther; for they are swine.

But, alas! it ever was, and shall be, that the greater number receive the words for newness and curiosity; and to seem to be somewhat, and that they have not gone to school in vain, they will forthwith, ere they have felt any change of living in themselves, be schoolmasters, and begin at liberty, and practise openly before their disciples. And when the pharisees see their traditions broken, they rage and persecute immediately. And then our new schoolmasters are neither grounded in the doctrine to defend their doings, nor rooted in the profession of a new life to suffer with Christ, &c.

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For all that ask receive; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. For what man is it among you, if his son ask him bread, that would proffer him a stone? Or if he asked him for fish, would he offer him a serpent? If ye then which are evil know to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him.

First, note of these words, that to pray is God's com-

* Asked as to their opinions.

mandment, as it is to believe in God, to love God, or to love thy neighbour; and so are alms and fasting also. Neither is it possible to believe in God, to love him, or to love thy neighbour, but that prayer will spring out thence immediately. For to believe in God, is to be sure that all thou hast is of him, and all thou needest must come of him. Which if thou do, thou canst not but continually thank him for his benefits, which thou continually, without ceasing, receivest of his hand, and thereto ever cry for help; for thou art ever in need, and canst no whence else be helped. And thy neighbour is in such necessity also; wherefore, if thou love him, it will compel thee to pity him, and to cry to God for him continually, and to thank as well for him as for thyself.

Secondly: This heaping of so many words together, Ask, seek, and knock; signifieth that the prayer must be continual; and so does the parable of the widow that sued to the wicked judge; (Luke xviii.) and the cause is, that we are ever in continual necessity, and all our life is a warfare and a perpetual battle, in which we prevail as long as we pray, and are overcome as soon as we cease praying; as Israel overcame the Amalekites, as long as Moses held up his hands in prayer, and as soon as he had let down his hands for weariness, the Amalekites prevailed and had the better. (Exod. xvii.) Christ warned his disciples at his Last Supper, to have peace in him; affirming that they should have none in the world. The false prophets shall ever impugn the faith in Christ's blood, and enforce to quench the true understanding of the law, and the right meaning and intent of all the works commanded by God; which fight is a fight above all fights. First, they shall be in such number, that Christ's true disciples shall be but a small flock in respect of them. They shall have works like Christ's; so that fasting, prayer, poverty, obedience, and chastity shall be the names of their profession. For, as Paul saith to the Corinthians, the angels or messengers of Satan shall change themselves into angels or messengers of light and truth. They shall come in Christ's name, and that with signs and miracles, and have the upper hand also, even to deceive the very elect, if it were possible. Yea, and beyond all this, if thou get the victory over the false prophets, and pluck a multitude out of their hands, there shall immediately rise of the same, and set up a new false sect against thee. And

against all these Amalekites, the only remedy is to lift up the hands of thy heart to God in continual prayer. Which hands, if thou for weariness once let fall, thou goest to the worst immediately. Then, beside the fight and conflict of the subtle sophistry, false miracles, disguised and hypocritical works of these false prophets, come the dogs and wolves of their disciples, with the servants of mammon, and the swine of thine own scholars; against all which thou hast no other shield or defence but prayer. Then the sins and lusts of thine own flesh, Satan, and a thousand temptations unto evil in the world, will either drive thee to the castle and refuge of prayer, or undoubtedly take thee prisoner.

Last of all, thy neighbour's necessity and thine own will compel thee to cry, Father, which art in heaven, give us our daily bread, though thou wert as rich as king Solomon. For Christ commands the rich as well as the poor to cry to God continually for their daily bread. And if they have no such need, then is Christ a deceiver and a mocker. What need I to pray thee to give or to lend me that which is in mine own possession already? Is not the first commandment that there is but one God, and that thou put thy whole trust in him? which, if it were written in thine heart, thou shouldest easily perceive; and that though thou hadst as many thousands as David left behind him, and Solomon heaped more to them, yet thou hadst no more than the poor beggar that goeth from door to door; yea, and that the beggar, if that commandment be written in his heart, is sure that he is as rich as thou. For, first, thou must acknowledge that thou hast received that great treasure of the hand of God. Wherefore, when thou fetchest a halfpenny thereof, thou oughtest to give God thanks in thine heart for the gift thereof.

Thou must confess, also, that God only has kept it and thee that same night, and ever before; or else be an idolater, and put thy trust in some other thing than God. And thou must confess that God only must keep it and thee, the day and night following, and so continually after; and not thine own wit,* or power, or the wit or power of any other creature or creatures. For if God kept it not for thee, it would be thine own destruction, and they that help thee to keep it would cut thy throat for it. There is no king in christendom so well beloved, but he has evil subjects enough

* Understanding, ability.

of his own, if God kept them not down with fear, that would at one hour rise upon him and slay him, to make havock of all he hath. Who is so well beloved throughout all England, but that there are enough in the same parish, or nigh about, that would, for his goods, wish him to hell if they could, and would with their hands destroy him, if God kept him not, and did not cast fear on them?

Now, then, if God must ever keep it for thee, and thou must daily receive it of his hand, as a poor man receives his alms of another man, thou art in no more surety of thy daily bread, no, though thou were a cardinal, than the poorest is. Wherefore, howsoever rich thou art, yet must thou ever cry to God for thy daily bread. So now it is a commandment to pray, and that continually; short, thick, and oft, as the psalms are, and all the prayers of the bible.

Finally: the third is, that we are commanded to pray with faith and trust, and that we believe in the Lord our God, and doubt not in his promises, unto which Christ induces us with an apt similitude, saying, If ye being evil can yet give good things unto your children, how much more shall God fulfil his promises of mercy unto his children, if they cry unto him? He is better and more merciful than all men. Wherefore, seeing God commands thee to pray, and forasmuch as thou hast such great necessity so to do, and because he is merciful, and has promised and is true, and cannot deny his own words; therefore pray, and when thou prayest, look not on thine unworthiness, but on his commandment, mercy, and goodness, and on his truth and faithfulness; and believe steadfastly in him. Moreover, whatsoever thou hast done, yet if thou repent and wilt amend, he promises that he will not think on thy sins. And though he defer thee, think it not long, faint not in thy faith, nor be slack in thy prayer. For he will surely come and give thee more than thou desirest, though he defer for thy profit, or change thy request into a better thing.

All things, therefore, whatsoever ye would men should do to you, so do ye to them. This is, verily, the law and the prophets.

This is a short sermon, so that no man need to complain that he cannot, for the length, bear it away. It is so nigh thee, that thou needest not to send over sea for it.

It is with thee, that thou needest not to be importunate upon the teacher, saying, Sir, I pray you, what say ye to this case and to that? and is not this lawful, and may I not do so and so well enough? Ask thine own conscience what thou mayest or oughtest to do. Wouldest thou men did so with thee, then do it. Wouldest thou not be so dealt with, then do it not. Thou wouldest not that men should do thee wrong and oppress thee; thou wouldest not that men should do thee shame and rebuke, lie against thee, kill thee, hire thine house from thee, or entice thy servant away, or take against thy will aught that is thine. Thou wouldest not that men should sell thee false ware when thou puttest them in trust to make it ready, or to lay it out for thee; nor wouldest thou that men should deceive thee with great oaths, swearing that to be good which, indeed, is very naught: thou wouldest not, also, that men should sell thee ware that is naught and too dear, to undo thee; do no such things, then, to thy neighbour. But as loth as thou wouldest be to buy false ware, or too dear, for undoing thyself, so loth be thou to sell false ware, or too dear, for undoing thy neighbour. And in all thy needs, how glad thou wouldest be to be helped, be so glad to help thy neighbour. And so, in all cases, examine thy conscience, and ask her what is to be done in all doubts between thy neighbour and thee, and she will teach thee, except thou be more filthy than a swine, and altogether brutish.

Christ saith here, This is the law and the prophets. And Matt. xxii. he saith, Thou shalt love thy Lord God with all thine heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; and, as Mark adds, With all thy might, and thy neighbour as thyself. In these two commandments hang the whole law and the prophets. And Paul (Rom. xiii. and Gal. v.) saith, that love is the fulfilling of the law; and it is written, that Christ is the fulfilling, or end of the law. To make all these agree, this thou must understand; that to love God purely, is the final and uttermost end of all the law and the prophets. To love thy neighbour is the end of all laws between man and man; such as kill not, steal not, bear no false witness, commit no adultery, covet not thy neighbour's wife, his house, ox, ass, maid, man-servant, nor aught that is his, &c. Christ is the fulfilling of the law for us, where we are imperfect. And when we break and repent, his fulfilling is imputed unto us. And this

text, This is the law and the prophets, mayest thou understand, as when Paul saith, Love is the fulfilling of the law. That is, to do as thou wouldest be done to, is all the law that is between thee and thy neighbour; and that according to the true understanding and interpreting of all true prophets.

Enter in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many they be that go in thereat. But strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few they be that find it.

The strait gate is the true knowledge and understanding of the law, and of the true intent of works. Which, whosoever understands, the same shall be driven to Christ to bring of his fulness, and to take him for his righteousness and fulfilling of the law, altogether at the beginning, and as often as we fall afterward, and for more than the thousand part of our fulfilling of the law and righteousness of our best works all our life long. For except the righteousness of Christ be knit to the best deed we do, it will be too short to reach to heaven.

And the narrow way is to live after this knowledge. He that will enter in at this gate, must be made anew; his head will else be too great, he must be untaught all that he has learned, to be made less for to enter in; and disused in all things to which he hath been accustomed, to be made less to walk through that narrow way. Where he shall find such a heap of temptations and so continual, that it shall be impossible to endure or to stand, but by prayer of strong faith.

And note another thing, that few find the way. Why? Their own wisdom, their own power, and the reasons of their own sophistry, blind them utterly. That is to say, the light of their own doctrine which is in them, is such extreme darkness that they cannot see. Should God let his church err, say they? Should our elders have gone out of the way? Should God have let the devil do these miracles, and so forth? And when Christ saith, Few shall find the gate; Yea, say they, in respect of the Turks and Saracens, which are the greater multitude. Yea, but yet hear a little; the scribes and pharisees, who had all the authority over the people, and taught out of the scripture, and the sadducees, with all other false prophets that

were when Christ came, were not Turks nor Saracens; neither had God any other church than was among them. And St. Peter prophesies that it shall be so among us, and that we shall be drawn with false sects of covetousness, to deny Christ, as we now do, and believe no more in him. And Paul and Christ confirm the same, that the elect should be deceived, if it were possible. Moreover, if it were enough to say, I will believe and do as mine elders have done, as though they could not err; then was Christ to blame for to say, that except thou forsake father, mother, and thine elders, thou couldest not be his disciple. Christ must be thy Master, and thou must be taught of God; and therefore oughtest thou to examine the doctrine of thine elders by the word of God. For the great multitude that Christ means, are the false prophets and them that follow them; as it shall better appear hereafter.

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing; but are within ravening wolves. By their fruits ye shall know them. Do men gather grapes of thorns, either figs of briers? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, nor a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is to be hewn down and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

Here Christ warns thee, and describes to thee, those captains who should so blind the great multitude that they should not find the strait gate, and lead them the broad way to perdition. Note first, that though they are false, yet he calls them prophets, which word in the new testament is taken for an expounder and an interpreter of scripture. And he saith, They shall come to you, my disciples; then they must be our preachers and our doctors. Yea, verily, they must be those our false preachers which Peter prophesied should be among us, and bring in damnable sects, for to fulfil and satisfy their covetousness, and follow the way and steps of their father Balaam. And they shall come thereto in sheep's clothing; therefore they are neither the Turks nor yet the Saracens. For they come clothed in iron and steel, and will suffer us to keep our faith, if we will submit ourselves to them, as the Greeks

do. And as for the Jews, they are a hundred times fewer than we, and are everywhere in bondage, yea, and for the great part captives unto us. They also are not clothed in sheep's skins, but maintain openly their faith altogether contrary to ours.

But what are these sheep's clothings? truly the very name of Christ. For saith Christ, (Matt. xxiv.) There shall come many in my name and deceive many. And besides that, they shall do miracles in Christ's name; as it follows in the text, that they shall call Christ, "Master, Master," and begin their sermon saying, Our Master Christ saith in such a chapter, Whatsoever ye bind upon earth shall be bound in heaven; see, friends, these are not our words, but our Master Christ's. And they shall do miracles in Christ's name thereto, to confirm the false doctrine which they preach in his name. Oh! fearful and terrible judgment of almighty God, and sentence of extreme rigorousness upon all that love not the truth when it is preached to them, that God, to avenge himself of their unkindness, shall send them so strong delusions, that doctrine should be preached unto them in the name of Christ, and made seemingly to follow out of his words and to be confirmed with miracles done in calling upon the name of Christ, to harden their hearts in the faith of lies, according to the prophecy of Paul to the Thessalonians, in the second epistle.

Another of their sheep's coats is, that they shall in every sermon preach mightily against the scribes and pharisees, against Faustus and Pelagius, with such like heretics; who yet never preached other doctrine than they themselves do. And more of their clothing is, they shall preach that which Christ preached; alms, prayer, and fasting; and profess obedience, poverty, and chastity; works that our Saviour Christ both preached, and did. Finally, they are holy church and cannot err.

But within they are ravening wolves. They preach to others Steal not; yet they themselves rob God of his honour, and take from him the praise and profit of all their doctrine and of all their works. They rob the law of God of its mighty power, wherewith it drives all men to Christ, and make it so weak, that the feeble freewill of man is not able to wrestle with it without calling to Christ for help.

They have robbed Christ of all his merits, and clothed themselves therewith. They have robbed the soul of

man of the bread of life, the faith and trust in Christ's blood; and have fed it with the shells and husks of the hope in their merits, and confidence in their good works.

They have robbed the works commanded by God, of the intent and purpose that they were ordained for. And with their obedience they have drawn themselves from under the obedience of all princes and temporal laws. With their poverty, they have robbed all nations and kingdoms, and so with their wilful poverty they have enriched themselves, and have made the commons poor. With their chastity they have filled the world full of lewdness, thinking to please God more highly with keeping a harlot than an honest chaste wife. If they say it is not truth, then all the world knoweth they lie, for if a priest marry an honest wife, they punish him immediately, and say he is a heinous heretic, as though matrimony were abominable. But if he keep a harlot, then is he a good chaste child of their holy father the pope, whose example they follow, and I warrant him sing mass on the next day after, as well as he did before, without either persecution or excommunication; such are the laws of their unchaste (I would say their own chaste) father.

If thou profess obedience, why runnest thou from father, mother, master, and ruler, whom God bids thee to obey, to be a friar? If thou obey, why obeyest thou not the king and his law, by whom God defends thee both in life and goods, and all thy great possessions?

If thou profess poverty, what dost thou with the lands of gentlemen, squires, knights, barons, earls, and dukes? Why should a lord's brother be a beggar's servant? or why should a beggar ride with three or four score horses waiting on him. Is it meet that a man of noble birth, and the right heir of the lands which thou possessest, should be thine horse-keeper, thou being a beggar?

If ye profess chastity, why desire ye above all other men the company of women? What do ye with harlots openly in many countries, and with secret dispensations? Why corrupt ye so much other men's wives? And why be there so many vices among you not to be spoken of?

Your charity is merciless to the rest of the world, to whom ye give nought again, and are only liberal to yourselves, as is the charity of thieves, thirty or forty of you together in one den; among which yet are not many that love three of his neighbours heartily.

Your fasting makes you as full and as fat as your hides can hold, beside that ye have a dispensation of your holy father for your fasting.

Your prayer is but pattering without all affection, your singing is but roaring to stretch out your maws, as do your other gestures and rising at midnight, to make the meat sink to the bottom of the stomach, that ye may have perfect digestion, and be ready to devour afresh against the next refection.

Ye shall know them by their fruits. First, thorns bear no grapes, nor briers figs. Also if thou see goodly blossoms in them, and thinkest there to have figs, grapes, or any fruit for the sustenance or comfort of man, go to them in time of need, and thou shalt find nought at all. Thou shalt find, Forsooth I have no goods, nor any thing proper, or that is mine own. It is the convent's. I were a thief if I gave it my father, whatsoever need he had. It is St. Edmund's patrimony, St. Alban's patrimony, St. Edward's patrimony, the goods of holy church, it may not be minished, nor occupied upon lay and profane uses.* The king of the realm for all that he defends them above all others, yet he gets nought, what need soever he have, save then only, when he must spend on their causes, all that they give, with all that he can get beside of his poor commons. If the king will attempt to take ought from them by the authority of his office, for the defence of the realm; or if any man will entreat them otherwise than they please themselves, by what law or right it be, they turn to thorns and briers, and at once become rougher than a hedgehog, and will sprinkle them with the holy water of their maledictions as thick as hail, and breathe out the lightning of excommunication upon them, and so consume them to powder.

Moreover a corrupt tree can bear no good fruit. That is, where they have fruit that seems to be good, go to and prove it, and thou shalt find it rotten, or the kernel eaten out, and that it is but as a hollow nut. For faith in Christ, that we and all our works done within the compass of the law of God, are accepted of God for his sake, is the

* In his answer to sir Thomas More's Dialogue, Tindal thus describes the ecclesiastics as "unthankful." 'And as for unthankful, they be so kind, that if they have received a thousand pound land of a man, yet for all that they would not receive one of his offspring unto a night's harbour at his need, for their founder's sake."

kernel, the sweetness and the pleasant beauty of all our works in the sight of God. As it is written, (John vi.) This is the work of God, that ye believe in him whom he hath sent. This faith is a work which God not only works in us, but also therein has pleasure and delectation, and in all others for that faith's sake.

Faith is the life of man, as it is written, The just shall live by faith, out of which life the pleasantness of all his works springs. As for an example, thou art a shoe-maker, which is a work within the laws of God, and sayest in thine heart, "Lo, O God, here I make a shoe as truly as I would for myself, to do my neighbour service, and to get my living in truth with the labour of mine hands, as thou commandest, and I thank thee that thou hast given me this craft, and makest it prosper that I get my living therewith, and am fully persuaded that both I and my work please thee, O Father, for thy Son Jesus' sake." Lo, now this faith makes even this simple work pleasant in the sight of God.

But shoe-making is not commanded by God? Yes: and has the promise of God annexed thereto. For God has commanded me, for the avoiding of sin, to do my brethren service, and to live thereby, and to choose one estate or other; for if thou wouldest receive only of thy brethren, and do nought again, thou wert a thief, and an extortioner, and a tyrant. And I choose shoe-making, or receive it at the obedience of mine elders. Now have I God's commandment to work therein truly, and his promise annexed thereto, that he will bless mine occupation, and make it prosperous and fruitful to bring me an honest living. Work I not now at God's commandment, and have his promise that it pleases him?

Note this also: First, my craft is God's commandment. Secondly, I believe, and am sure, that my work pleases God for Christ's sake. Thirdly, my work is profitable unto my neighbour, and helps his necessity. Fourthly, I receive my reward of the hand of God with thanks; and work, surely certified that I please God in my work through Christ, and that God will give me my daily bread thereby.

But if thou examine their doctrine, thou shalt find that this faith is away in all their fruits, and therefore are they worm eaten and shells without kernels.

Note again; the Turks and Jews give alms as well as

we, and as much, and yet are abominable for lack of faith and knowledge of the true intent. What saith the text: He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall have the reward of a prophet. That is, because thou aidest him in preaching of Christ's word, thou shalt be partaker with him and have the same reward. And he that receiveth a disciple in the name of a disciple, shall have, &c. And he that giveth one of these little ones but a cup of cold water for my name's sake, shall have his reward. If a king minister his kingdom in the faith of this name, because his subjects are his brethren and the price of Christ's blood, he pleases God highly; and if this faith be not there it pleases him not. And if I sew a shoe truly in the faith of his name, to do my brother service, because he is the price of Christ's blood, it pleases God. Thus is faith the goodness of all works.

Finally, when God giveth, and I receive with thanks, is not God as well pleased as when I give for his sake, and he receiveth? A true friend is as glad to do his friend a good turn, as to receive a good turn. When the father gives his son a new coat, and saith, Am not I a good father, and wilt not thou love me again, and do what I bid thee? and the boy receives it with thanks and saith, yea, and is glad and proud thereof; doth not the father rejoice as much now in the lad, as another time when the lad does whatsoever it be at his father's commandment? But the false prophets do well to paint God after the likeness of their ownselves; as glad when he receiveth, yea, when they receive in his name; but sour, grudging, and evil content when he giveth again. But thou pleasest God when thou askest in faith, and when thou receivest with thanks, and when thou rejoicest in his gifts, and lovest him again, to keep his commandments, and the appointment and covenant made between him and thee.

And for a conclusion, besides that they expel faith, which is the goodness of all works, they set up works of their own making, to destroy the works of God, and to be holier than God's works, to the despising of God's works, and to make God's works vile.

With their chastity they destroy the chastity that God ordained, and only requires. With their obedience they destroy the obedience that God ordained in this world, and desires no other. With their poverty they destroy the poverty of the spirit, which Christ taught only; which is,

only not to love worldly goods. With their fast, they destroy the fast which God commands, that is, a perpetual soberness to tame the flesh. With their pattering prayer, they destroy the prayer taught by God, which is either thanks, or desiring help with faith and trust that God hears me.

Their holiness is to forbid that which God ordained to be received with thanksgiving, as meat and matrimony. And their own works they maintain, and let God's decay. Break theirs, and they persecute to the death. But break God's, and they either look through the fingers, or else give thee a flap with a fox-tail for a little money.* There is no order among them that is so perfect, but that they have a prison more cruel than any jail of thieves and murderers. And if one of their brethren commit fornication or adultery in the world, he finishes his penance therein in three weeks or a month, and then is sent to another place of the same religion. But if he attempt to put off the holy habit, he never comes out, and is so straitly dieted thereto, that it is marvel if he live a year; beside other cruel murder that has been found among them,† and yet is this shameful dieting of theirs murder cruel enough.

Be not deceived with visions, nor yet with miracles. But go to and judge their works, for the spiritual judgeth all things, saith Paul, 1 Cor. ii. Who is that "spiritual?" Not such as we now call men of holy church; but all that have the true interpretation of the law written in their heart—the right faith of Christ, and the true intent of works, which God bids us work. He is spiritual and judgeth all things, and is judged of no man.

Not all that say to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that fulfilleth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say unto me at that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in thy name? and in thy name cast out devils? and did we not in thy name many miracles? Then will I confess unto them, I never knew you, depart from me, ye workers of iniquity.

This twice naming of the Lord hath vehemency, and betokens that they which shall be excluded, are such as think

* Romish absolution and penance.

† Ask the Austin friars why they murdered one of their fellows at London.—*Tindal.*

themselves better and more perfect than other men, and to deserve heaven with holy works, not for themselves only, but also for others. And by that they prophesied, by which thou mayest understand the interpreting of scripture, and by that they cast out devils, and did miracles in Christ's name, and for all that, they are yet workers of wickedness, and do not the will of the Father which is in heaven, it is plain that they are false prophets, and even the same of which Christ warned before.

And now, forasmuch as Christ and his apostles warn us that such shall come, and describe to us the fashions of their visors, Christ's name, holy church, holy fathers, and fifteen hundred years, with scripture and miracles, and command us to turn our eyes from their visors, and consider their fruits, and cut them up, and look within whether they be sound in the core and kernel or no, and give us a rule to try them by; is it excuse good enough to say, God will not let so great a multitude err; I will follow the most part, and believe as my fathers did, and as the preachers teach, and will not busy myself; choose them, the fault is theirs, and not ours; God shall not lay it to our charge if we err?

Where such words are, there are the false prophets already. For where no love to the truth is, there are the false prophets; and where such words are, it is plain there is no love to the truth; therefore where such words are, there are the false prophets in their full swing, by Paul's rule, 2 Thess. ii. Another conclusion; Where no love to the truth is, there are false prophets; the greatest of the world have least love to the truth; therefore the false prophets are the chaplains of the greatest, which may with the sword compel the rest; as the kings of Israel compelled the people to worship the golden calves. And by false prophets understand false teachers, as Peter calls them, and wicked expounders of the scripture.

Whosoever heareth these words of me, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man that built his house upon a rock: and there fell a rain, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, but it fell not, for it was grounded upon a rock. And all that hear of me these words, and do them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man that built his house upon the sand: and there fell a rain, and the floods came, and

the winds blew, and dashed upon that house, and it fell, and the fall thereof was great.

Christ has two sorts of hearers, of which neither of them do thereafter. The one will be saved by faith of their own making, without works; the other with works of their own making, without faith. The first are those voluptuaries which have yielded themselves up to sin, saying, Tush, God is merciful, and Christ died for us; that must save us only, for we cannot but sin without resistance. The second are the hypocrites, who will deserve all with their own imagined works only. And of faith they have no other experience, save that it is a little meritorious where it is painful to be believed; as their foolish belief of the way of the birth of Christ; or that there is no bread in the sacrament nor wine, though all the five senses say yea. And the meritorious pain of this belief is so heavy to them, that except they had feigned them a thousand wise similitudes and depraved likenesses, and as many mad reasons to stay them withal, and to help to captivate their understanding, they were like to cast all off their backs. And the only refuge of a great many to keep in that faith, is to cast it out of their minds, and not to think upon it. As though they forgive not, yet if they put the displeasure out of their minds, and think not of it till a good occasion be given to avenge it, they think they love their neighbour well enough all the while, and are in good charity.

And the faith of the best of them is but like their faith in other worldly stories. But the faith, which is trust and confidence to be saved, and to have their sins forgiven by Christ which was so born, they have not at all. That faith they have in their own works only. But the true hearers understand the law, as Christ interprets it here, and feel thereby their righteous condemnation, and run to Christ for succour, and for remission of all their sins that are past, and for all the sin which through infirmities they do, and for remission of that wherein the law is too strong for their weak nature.

And upon that they consent to the law, love it, and profess it, to fulfil it to the uttermost of their power, and then go to and work. Faith, or confidence in Christ's blood, without help, and before the works of the law, brings all manner of remission of sins, and satisfaction. Faith is

mother of love; faith accompanies love in all her works, to fulfil as much as there lacketh in our doing the law, of that perfect love which Christ had to his Father, and us, in his fulfilling of the law for us. Now, when we are reconciled, then is love and faith together our righteousness, our keeping the law, our continuing, our proceeding forward in the grace which we stand in, and our bringing to the everlasting saving and everlasting life. And the works are esteemed of God according to the love of the heart. If the works be great, and love be little and cold, then the works are regarded thereafter of God. If the works be small, and love much and fervent, the works are taken for great of God.

And it came to pass, that when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine; for he taught them as one having power, and not as the scribes.

The scribes and pharisees had thrust the sword of the word of God into a scabbard, or sheath of glosses, and therein had knit it fast, that it could neither stab nor cut; teaching dead works without faith and love, which are the life and the whole goodness of all works, and the only thing why they please God. And therefore their audience ever abode carnal and fleshly minded, without faith to God and love to their neighbours.

Christ's words were spirit and life. (John vi.) That is to say, they ministered spirit and life, and entered into the heart, and grated on the conscience; and, through preaching the law, made the hearers perceive their duties; even what love they owed to God, and what to man, and the just condemnation of all them that had not the love of God and man written in their hearts; and, through preaching of faith, made all that consented to the law of God feel the mercy of God in Christ, and certified them of their salvation. For the word of God is a two-edged sword, that pierceth and divideth the spirit and soul of man asunder. (Heb. iv.) A man, before the preaching of God's word, is but one man, all flesh, the soul consenting unto the lusts of the flesh, to follow them. But the sword of the word of God, where it takes effect, divides a man in two, and sets him at variance against his ownself; the flesh hauling one way, and the spirit drawing another: the flesh raging to follow lusts, and the spirit calling back

again to follow the law and will of God. A man, all the while he consents to the flesh, and before he is born again in Christ, is called soul or carnal. But when he is renewed in Christ, through the word of life, and hath the love of God and of his neighbour, and the faith of Christ written in his heart, he is called spirit or spiritual. The Lord of all mercy send us preachers with power; that is to say, true expounders of the word of God, and speakers to the heart of man; and deliver us from scribes, pharisees, hypocrites, and all false prophets.* Amen.

* In his treatise entitled "*The Practice of Prelates*, whether the King's grace may be separated from his Queen because she was his Brother's Wife," written in 1530, Tindal expressly calls the Romish ecclesiastics, "our scribes and pharisees," imputing to their conduct many of the evils under which the realm was suffering. That tract contains an able exposure of their practices; it refers to many circumstances connected with the history of those times, and a summary of the contents may be acceptable to the reader, although as a whole it is not suitable for insertion in the present work; they are as follows:—Prelates appointed to preach Christ may not leave God's word, and minister temporal offices.—Peter was not greater than the other apostles by any authority given him of Christ.—How the gospel punishes trespassers, and how by the gospel we ought to go to law with our adversaries.—What officers the apostles ordained in Christ's church, and what their offices were to do.—By what means the prelates fell from Christ.—How the bishop of Rome became greater than others, and called himself pope.—By what means the pope invaded the empire.—A proper similitude to describe our holy father.—How the pope receiveth his kingdom of the devil, and how he distributeth it again.—How the pope made him a law, and why.—How the pope corrupteth the scripture, and why.—How they prove all their general councils.—An example of their practice out of our own chronicles.—By what craft the pope keepeth the emperor down.—The practice of our time.—The cause of all that we have suffered this twenty years.—Why the king's sister was turned unto France.—The cause of the journey unto Calais.—How the emperor came through England.—Why the queen must be divorced.—Of the divorcement.—By what means the divorcement should cost the realm.—The putting down of cardinal Wolsey.—What the cause of all this mischief is.

The reader may easily suppose how strong the enmity of the Romish ecclesiastics towards Tindal must have been when he proved the errors of their doctrines so fully, as he did in "The Exposition of the Sermon on the Mount," and exposed their political malversations so strongly as he did in "The Practice of Prelates." In the edition of Tindal's works printed in the reign of queen Elizabeth, this treatise is entitled "The Practice of Papistical Prelates," and the three chapters relative to the divorce are omitted. Among the disadvantages which Tindal considered might ensue to the realm from the divorce of queen Catherine was, that it would make "the king of Scots next to the crown."

THE PROLOGUE

TO

THE PROPHET JONAS.*

As the envious Philistines stopped the wells of Abraham, and filled them up with earth, to put the memorial out of mind, to the intent that they might challenge the ground; even so the fleshly-minded hypocrites stop up the veins of life which are in the scripture, with the earth of their traditions, false similitudes, and lying allegories; and that of like zeal to make the scripture their own possession and merchandise, and so to shut up the kingdom of heaven, which is God's word; neither entering in themselves, nor suffering them that would.

The scripture has a body without, and within a soul, spirit, and life. Without, it has a bark, a shell, and as it were a hard bone for the fleshly minded to gnaw upon. And within, it has pith, kernel, marrow, and all sweetness for God's elect whom he hath chosen, to give them his Spirit, and to write his law, and the faith of his Son in their hearts.

The scripture contains three things in it: first the law, to condemn all flesh; secondly, the gospel, that is to say, promises of mercy for all that repent and acknowledge their sins, at the preaching of the law, and consent in their hearts that the law is good, and submit themselves to be scholars to learn to keep the law, and to learn to believe the mercy that is promised them; and thirdly, the stories and lives of those scholars, both what befell them, and also by what means their schoolmaster taught them and made them perfect, and how he tried the true from the false.

When the hypocrites come to the law, they put glosses too, and make no more of it than of a worldly law which is satisfied with the outward work, and which a Turk may also fulfil. When yet God's law never ceases to condemn

* This prologue was prefixed by Tindal to his translation of Jonas, printed on the continent in a separate form, and also with other prophets in 1530.—*Tanner.*

a man, until it be written in his heart, and until he keep it naturally without compulsion, and all other respect, save only of pure love to God and his neighbour, as he naturally eats when he is a hungred without compulsion, and all other respects, save to slake his hunger only. And when they come to the gospel, there they mingle their leaven, and say, God now receives us no more to mercy, but of mercy receives us to penance, that is, by holy deeds that make them fat bellies, and make us their captives both in soul and body. And yet they feign that their idol the pope is so merciful, that if thou make a little money glister in his Balaam's eyes, there is neither penance, nor purgatory, nor any fasting at all, but to fly to heaven as swift as a thought, and at the twinkling of an eye.

And the lives, stories, and gifts of men, which are contained in the Bible they read as things no more pertaining unto them, than a tale of Robin Hood; and as things they wot not whereto they serve, save to feign false descant* and juggling allegories to establish their kingdom withal. And one of the chiefest and fleshliest studies they have, is to magnify the saints above measure, and above the truth; and with their poetry to make them greater than ever God made them. And if they find any infirmity, or sin ascribed unto the saints, they excuse it with all diligence, diminishing the glory of the mercy of God, and robbing wretched sinners of all their comfort; and think thereby to flatter the saints, and to obtain their favour, and to make special advocates of them, even as a man would obtain the favour of worldly tyrants. As they also feign the saints to be more cruel than any heathen man ever was, and more wreakful and vengeful than the poets feign their gods or their furies that torment the souls in hell, if their evens be not fasted, and their images visited and saluted with a paternoster, (which prayer only our lips are acquainted with, our hearts not understanding it at all,) and worshipped with a candle, and by the offering of our devotion in the place which they have chosen to hear supplications, and make petitions of their clients therein.

But thou, reader, think of the law of God, that it is altogether spiritual, and so spiritual that it is never fulfilled with deeds or works, until they flow out of thine heart, with as great love toward thy neighbour, for no deserving of his, yea though he be thine enemy; as Christ

* Discourses.

loved thee, and died for thee, for no deserving of thine, but even when thou wast his enemy. And in the mean time, throughout all our infancy and childhood in Christ, till we be grown up unto perfect men, in the full knowledge of Christ, and full love of Christ again, and of our neighbours for his sake, after the example of his love to us, remembering that the fulfilling of the law is a fast faith in Christ's blood coupled with our profession, and submit ourselves to do better.

And of the gospel or promises which thou meetest in the scripture, believe firmly that God will fulfil them unto thee, and that unto the uttermost jot, at the repentance of thine heart, when thou turnest to him and forsakest evil, even of his goodness and fatherly mercy unto thee, and not for thy flattering him with hypocritical works of thine own feigning. So that a firm faith only, without respect of all works, is the forgiveness both of the sin which we did in time of ignorance, with lust and consent to sin; and also of that sin which we do by chance, and of frailty, after we are come to knowledge, and have professed the law out of our hearts. And all deeds serve only to help our neighbours, and to tame our flesh, that we fall not to sin again; and to exercise our souls in virtue, and not to make satisfaction toward God for the sin that is once past.

And all other stories of the Bible, without exception, are the practising of the law and of the gospel; and are true and faithful examples, and sure earnest that God will even so deal with us, as he did with them, in all infirmities, in all temptations, and in all like cases and chances. Wherein you see on the one side how fatherly and tenderly, and how with all compassion God treats his elect, who submit themselves as scholars, to learn to walk in the ways of his laws, and to keep them of love. If they forgot themselves at any time, he would stir them up again with all mercy; if they fell and hurt themselves, he healed them again with all compassion and tenderness of heart. He hath oft brought great tribulation and adversity upon his elect; but all of fatherly love only, to teach them, and to make them see their own hearts, and the sin that lay hid there, that they might afterwards feel his mercy. For his mercy waited upon them, to rid them out again, as soon as they were learned, and had come to the knowledge of their own hearts; so that he never cast man away, how deep soever he had sinned, save them only which had first cast the yoke

of his laws from their necks, with utter defiance, and malice of heart.

Which examples are most comfortable for us when we are fallen into sin, and God is come upon us with a scourge; that we despair not, but repent with full hope of mercy, after the examples of mercy that are gone before. And therefore they were written for our learning, as Paul testifies, (Rom. xv.) to comfort us, that we might the better put our hope and trust in God, when we see how merciful he has been in times past unto our weak brethren that are gone before, in all their adversities, need, temptations, yea, and horrible sins into which they now and then fell.

And on the other side, you see how they that hardened their hearts, and sinned of malice, and refused mercy that was offered them, and had no power to repent, perished at the latter end with all confusion and shame mercilessly. Which examples are very good and necessary to keep us in awe and dread in time of prosperity; as thou mayest see by Paul, (1 Cor. x.) that we abide in the fear of God, and wax not wild and fall to vanities, and so sin and provoke God, and bring wrath upon us.

And, thirdly, you see in the practice how, as God is merciful and long-suffering, even so were all his true prophets and preachers, bearing the infirmities of their weak brethren, and their own wrongs and injuries with all patience and long-suffering, never casting any of them off, until they sinned against the Holy Ghost, maliciously persecuting the open and manifest truth. Contrary to the example of the pope, who, in sinning against God, and to quench the truth of his Holy Spirit, is ever chief captain and trumpet blower to set others at work, and seeks only his own freedom, liberty, privilege, wealth, prosperity, profit, pleasure, pastime, honour, and glory, with the bondage, thraldom, captivity, misery, wretchedness, and vile subjection of his brethren: and in his own cause is so fervent, so stiff, and cruel, that he will not suffer one word spoken against his false majesty, wily inventions, and juggling hypocrisy to be unavenged, though all christendom should be set together by the ears, and should cost he cared not how many hundred thousand their lives.

Now that thou mayest read Jonas fruitfully, and not as a poet's fable, but as an obligation between God and thy

soul; as an earnest penny given thee of God, that he will help thee in time of need, if thou turn to him; and as the word of God the only food and life of thy soul, this mark and note. First, consider that Jonas was the friend of God, and a man chosen of God, to testify his name unto the world; but yet a young scholar, weak and rude, after the fashion of the apostles while Christ was yet with them bodily, whom though Christ ever taught them to be meek, and to humble themselves, yet often strove among themselves who should be greatest. The sons of Zebedee would sit the one on the right hand of Christ, the other on the left. They would pray that fire might descend from heaven and consume the Samaritans. When Christ asked, Whom say men that I am? Peter answered, Thou art the Son of the living God; as though Peter had been as perfect as an angel. But immediately after, when Christ preached unto them of his death and passion, Peter was angry and rebuked Christ, and thought earnestly that he had raved, and knew not what he said; as at another time, when Christ was so fervently busied in healing the people that he had no leisure to eat, they went out to hold him, supposing that he had been beside himself. And they forbade one that cast out devils in Christ's name, because he waited not on them, so glorious were they yet.

And though Christ taught always to forgive, yet Peter, after long going to school, asked whether men should forgive seven times, thinking that eight times had been too much. And at the last supper Peter would have died with Christ; but yet within a few hours afterwards he denied him, both cowardly and shamefully. And after the same manner, though he had so long heard that no man might avenge himself, but rather turn the other cheek than smite again; yet when Christ was taken, Peter asked whether it were lawful to smite with the sword, and tarried not for an answer, but laid on rashly. So that though when we come first unto the knowledge of the truth, and the peace is made between God and us, and we love his laws, and believe and trust in him as in our Father, and have good hearts unto him, and are born anew in the Spirit, yet we are but children and young scholars, weak and feeble; and must have leisure to grow in the Spirit, in knowledge, in love, and in the deeds thereof, as young children must have time to grow in their bodies.

And God our Father and schoolmaster feedeth us, and

teacheth us according to the capacity of our stomachs, and makes us to grow and wax perfect, and fines and tries us as gold, in the fire of temptations and tribulations; as Moses witnesses, (Deut. viii.) saying, "Remember all the way by which the Lord thy God carried thee this forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to tempt or provoke thee, that it might be known what was in thine heart. He brought thee into adversity, and made thee a hungred, and then fed thee with manna, which neither thou nor yet thy fathers ever knew of; to teach that man liveth not by bread only but by all that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." For the promises of God are life unto all that cleave unto them, much more than bread and bodily sustenance: as the journey of the children of Israel out of Egypt into the land promised them, ministers to thee notable examples, and that abundantly, as does all the rest of the Bible also. Howbeit, it is impossible for flesh to believe, and to trust in the truth of God's promises, until he have learned it in much tribulation, after that God has delivered him out thereof again.

God, therefore, to teach Jonas, and to show him his own heart, and to make him perfect, and to instruct us also by his example, sent him out of the land of Israel where he was a prophet, to go among the heathen people, and to the greatest and mightiest city of the world at that time, called Nineveh, to preach that within forty days they should all perish for their sins, and that the city should be overthrown. Which message the free-will of Jonas had as much power to do, as the weakest-hearted woman in the world has power, if she were commanded, to leap into a tub of living snakes and adders; as, probably, if God had commanded Sarah to have sacrificed her son Isaac, as he commanded Abraham, she would have disputed with him ere she had done it; or though she were strong enough, yet many a holy saint could not have found in their hearts, but would have run away from the presence of the commandment of God, with Jonas, if they had been so strongly tempted.

For Jonas thought after this manner: Lo, I am here a prophet unto God's people the Israelites; who, though they have God's word testified unto them daily, yet despise it, and worship God under the likeness of calves, and after all manner of fashions, save after his own word; and therefore are of all nations the worst, and most worthy of

punishment. And yet God, for love of a few that are among them, and for his name's sake, spares and defends them. How then should God take such cruel vengeance on so great a multitude of them to whom his name was never preached, and therefore are not the tenth part so evil as these! If I shall therefore go preach, so shall I lie and shame myself and God thereto, and make them the more to despise God, and set the less by him, and to be the more cruel unto his people.

And upon that imagination he fled from the face or presence of God; that is, out of the country wherein God was worshipped, and from the prosecuting of God's commandment; and thought, I will get me another way among the heathen people, and be no more a prophet, but live at rest, and out of all cumbrance. Nevertheless, the God of all mercy, who cares for his elect children, and turns all unto good to them, and smites them to heal them again, and kills them to make them alive again, and plays with them, as a father doth sometime with his young ignorant children, and tries them, and proves them, to make them see their own hearts, provided for Jonas, how all things should be.

When Jonas entered into the ship, he laid him down to sleep, and to take his rest; that is, his conscience was tossed between the commandment of God, which sent him to Nineveh, and his fleshly wisdom, that dissuaded and counselled him the contrary, and at the last prevailed against the commandment, and carried him another way, as a ship caught between two streams; and as poets feign the mother of Meleager to be between divers affections, while to avenge her brother's death she sought to slay her own son. Whereupon for very pain and tediousness he lay down to sleep, to put the commandment, which so gnawed and fretted his conscience, out of mind; as the nature of all the wicked is when they have sinned a good,* to seek all means with riot, revel, and pastime, to drive the remembrance of sin out of their thoughts; or, as Adam did, to cover their nakedness with aprons of pope-holy works.—But God awoke him out of his dream, and set his sins before his face.

For when the lot had caught Jonas, then be sure that his sins came to remembrance again; and that his conscience raged no less than the waves of the sea. And then he thought that he only was a sinner, and the heathen that

* Much, in earnest.

were in the ship were none in respect of him; and he thought also, as verily as he was fled from God, that as verily God had cast him away: for the sight of the rod maketh the child not only to see, and to acknowledge his fault, but also to forget all his father's old mercy and kindness. And then he confessed his sin openly, and yet had rather perish alone, than that the others should have perished with him, for his sake; and so of very desperation to have lived any longer, he had cast him into the sea betimes, except they would be lost also.

To speak of lots, how far they are lawful is a light question. First, to use them for the breaking of strife; as when partners, their goods as equally divided as they can, take every man his part by lot, to avoid all suspicion of deceitfulness: and as the apostles, in the first of the Acts, when they sought another to succeed Judas the traitor, and two persons were presented, then, to break strife, and to satisfy all parties, did cast lots whether should be admitted, desiring God to temper them, and to take whom he knew most meet, seeing they knew not which to prefer, or haply could not all agree on; either is lawful, and in all like cases. But to abuse them unto the tempting of God, and to compel him therewith to utter things whereof we stand in doubt, when we have no commandment of him so to do, as these heathen here did, though God turned it unto his glory, cannot but be evil.

The heathen shipmen, astonished at the sight of the miracle, feared God, prayed to him, offered sacrifice, and vowed vows. And I doubt not but that some of them, or haply all, came thereby unto the true knowledge, and true worshipping of God, and were won to God in their souls. And thus God, who is infinitely merciful in all his ways, wrought their soul's health out of the infirmity of Jonas; even of his good will and purpose, and love wherewith he loved them before the world was made, and not of chance, as it appeareth unto the eyes of the ignorant.

And that Jonas was three days and three nights in the belly of his fish, we cannot thereby prove unto the Jews and infidels, or unto any man, that Christ must therefore die, and be buried and rise again. But we use the example and likeness to strengthen the faith of the weak. For he that believeth the one, cannot doubt in the other: inasmuch as the hand of God was no less mighty in preserving Jonas alive against all natural possibility, and in

delivering him safe out of his fish, than in raising up Christ again out of his sepulchre. And we may describe the power and virtue of the resurrection thereby, as Christ himself borrows the similitude thereto, (Matt. xii.) saying unto the Jews that came about him, and desired a sign or a wonder from heaven to certify them that he was Christ, This evil and wedlock-breaking nation (which break the wedlock of faith, wherewith they be married unto God, and believe in their false works) seek a sign, but there shall no sign be given them save the sign of the prophet Jonas. For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, even so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Which was a watch-word, and a sharp threatening unto the Jews; and as much to say as thus: Ye hard-hearted Jews seek a sign; lo, this shall be your sign. As Jonas was raised out of the sepulchre of his fish, and then sent unto the Ninevites to preach that they should perish; even so shall I rise again out of my sepulchre, and come and preach repentance unto you. See, therefore, that ye repent when ye see the sign, or else ye shall surely perish, and not escape. For though the infirmities which ye now see in my flesh be a hinderance unto your fathers, ye shall be without excuse when ye see so great a miracle, and so great power of God shed out upon you. And so Christ came again after the resurrection, in his Spirit, and preached repentance unto them by the mouth of his apostles and disciples, and with miracles of the Holy Ghost. And all that repented not, perished shortly after, and the rest were carried away captive into all quarters of the world, for an example, as ye see unto this day.

And in like manner, since the world began, wheresoever repentance was offered and not received, there God took cruel vengeance immediately; as ye see in the flood of Noah, in the overthrowing of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all the country about; and as ye see of Egypt, of the Amorites, Canaanites, and afterward of the very Israelites; and then, at the last, of the Jews too, and of the Assyrians and Babylonians; and so throughout all the empires of the world.

Gildas preached repentance unto the old Britons that inhabited England: they repented not, and therefore God sent in their enemies upon them on every side, and

destroyed them, and gave the land unto other nations.* And great vengeance hath been taken in that land for sin since that time.

Wickliff preached repentance unto our fathers not long since; they repented not, for their hearts were hardened, and their eyes blinded with their own pope-holy righteousness, wherewith they had made their souls gay against the receiving again of the wicked spirit, that bringeth seven worse than himself with him; and maketh the latter end worse than the beginning: for in open sins there is hope of repentance; but in holy hypocrisy none at all. But what followed? They slew their true and right king, and set up three wrong kings, under whom all the noble blood was slain and half the commons thereto; what in France, and what with their own sword, in fighting among themselves for the crown; and the cities and towns decayed, and the land brought half into a wilderness, in respect of what it was before.†

And now Christ, to preach repentance, is risen yet once again out of his sepulchre in which the pope had buried him, and kept him down with his pillars and poleaxes, and all disguisings of hypocrisy, with guile, wiles, and falsehood, and with the sword of all princes, whom he had blinded with his false merchandize. And as I doubt not of the examples that are past, so am I sure that great wrath will follow, except repentance turn it back again and cease it.

When Jonas had been in the fish's belly a space, and the rage of his conscience was somewhat quieted and assuaged, and he came to himself again and had received a little hope, the qualms and pangs of desperation which went over his heart, being half overcome, he prayed, as he mentions in the text, saying, Jonas prayed unto the Lord his God out of the belly of the fish. But the words of that prayer are not set here. The prayer that here stands in the text is the prayer of praise and thanksgiving, which he prayed and wrote when he was escaped, and past all jeopardy.

In the end of which prayer he saith, "I will sacrifice

* Gildas, the oldest British historian, was born about the year 500. From his writings he appears to have been a monk, he was a celebrated and zealous preacher of christianity.

† They slew Richard the Second. They set up Henry the Fourth, Henry the Fifth, Henry the Sixth.—*Fox.*

with the voice of thanksgiving, and pay that I have vowed, that saving cometh of the Lord." For verily, to confess out of the heart that all benefits come of God, even out of the goodness of his mercy, and not deserving of our deeds, is the only sacrifice that pleases God. And to believe that, all the Jews vowed in their circumcision, as we in our baptism; which vow Jonas, being taught by experience, promised to pay. For those outward sacrifices of beasts, unto which Jonas had haply ascribed too much before, were but feeble and childish things, and not ordained that the works of themselves should be a service unto the people, but to put them in remembrance of this inward sacrifice of thanks and of faith, to trust and believe in God the only Saviour; which signification, when it was away, they were abominable and devilish idolatry, and image service; as our ceremonies and sacraments are become now to all that trust and believe in the work of them, and are not taught the significations, to edify their souls with knowledge and the doctrine of God.

When Jonas was cast upon land again, then his will was free, and he had power to go whither God sent him, and to do what God bade, his own imaginations laid apart; for he had been at a new school, yea, and in a furnace where he was cleansed from much refuse and dross of fleshly wisdom, which resisted the wisdom of God, and led Jonas's will contrary unto the will of God. For as far as we are blind in Adam, we cannot but seek and will our own profit, pleasure, and glory,—and as far as we are taught in the Spirit, we cannot but seek and will the pleasure and glory of God only.

And as to the three days' journey of Nineveh, whether it were in length, or to go round about it, or through all the streets, I commit unto the discretion of other men. But I think that it was then the greatest city of the world.

And that Jonas went a day's journey in the city, I suppose he did it not in one day; but went fair and easily, preaching here a sermon, and there another; and rebuked the sin of the people, for which they must perish.

And when thou art come unto the repentance of the Ninevites, there hast thou sure earnest, that howsoever angry God be, yet he remembers mercy unto all that truly repent and believe in mercy: which example our Saviour Christ also casteth in the teeth of the hardened Jews, saying, "The Ninevites shall rise in judgment with this nation, and condemn them; for they repented at the

preaching of Jonas, and behold a greater than Jonas;" here meaning himself, at whose preaching yet, though it were never so mighty to pierce the heart, and for all his miracles thereto, the hard-hearted Jews could not repent; when the heathen Ninevites repented at the bare preaching of Jonas, rebuking their sins without any miracle at all.—Why? For the Jews had leavened the spiritual law of God, and with their glosses had made it altogether earthly and fleshly, and so had set a veil or covering on Moses' face, to shadow and darken the glorious brightness of his countenance. It was sin to steal, but to rob widow's houses under a colour of long praying, and to poll, in the name of offerings, and to snare the people with intolerable constitutions against all love, to catch their money out of their purses—was no sin at all.

To smite father and mother was sin; but to withdraw help from them at their need, for blind zeal of offering, unto the profit of the holy pharisees—was then as meritorious as it is now to let all thy kin choose whether they will sink or swim, while thou buildest and makest goodly foundations for holy people,* which thou hast chosen to be thy Christ—for to supple thy soul with the oil of their sweet blessings, and to be thy Jesus for to save thy soul from the purgatory of the blood that only purgeth sin, with their watching, fasting, woolward going,† and rising at midnight, &c., wherewith yet they purge not themselves from their covetousness, pride, lechery, or any vice that thou seest among the lay people.

It was great sin for Christ to heal the people on the sabbath day, unto the glory of God his Father,—but none at all for them to help their cattle unto their own profit!

It was sin to eat with unwashed hands, or on an unwashed table, or out of an unwashed dish,—but to eat out of that purified dish, that which came by bribery, theft, and extortion, was no sin at all!

It was exceeding meritorious to make many disciples,—but to teach them to fear God in his ordinances, had they no care at all!

The high prelates so defended the right of holy church, and so feared the people with the curse of God, and terrible pains of hell, that no man durst leave the vilest herb in his garden untithed.‡ And the offerings and things

* Monks or nuns.

† Wearing woollen or hair cloth next the skin, as the monks.

‡ Matt. xxiii. 23.

dedicated unto God, for the profit of his holy vicars, were in such estimation and reverence, that it was a much greater sin to swear truly by them, than to forswear thyself by God. What vengeance then of God, and how terrible and cruel damnation think ye preached they to fall on them that had stolen the holy things? And yet, saith Christ, that righteousness and faith in keeping promise, mercy, and impartial judgment, were utterly trodden under foot, and wholly despised by those blessed fathers, who so mightily maintained Aaron's patrimony, and had made it so prosperous, and environed it, and walled it about on every side with the fear of God, that no man durst touch it!

It was great holiness to garnish the sepulchres of the prophets, and to condemn their own fathers for slaying of them, and yet were they themselves, for blind zeal of their own constitutions, as ready as their fathers, to slay whosoever testified unto them the same truth which the prophets testified unto their fathers! So that Christ compared all the righteousness of those holy patriarchs unto the outward beauty of a painted sepulchre, full of stench and all uncleanness within!

And, finally, to beguile a man's neighbour, in subtle bargaining, and to wrap and compass him in with cautels* of the law, was then, as it is now in the kingdom of the pope. By the reason whereof, they excluded the law of love out of their hearts; and consequently, all true repentance: for how could they repent of that which they could not see to be sin?

And on the other side, they had set up a righteousness of holy works, to cleanse their souls withal; as the pope sanctifies us with holy oil, holy bread, holy salt, holy candles, holy dumb ceremonies, and holy dumb blessings, and with whatsoever holiness thou wilt, save with the holiness of God's word, which alone speaks unto the heart, and shows the soul its filthiness, and the uncleanness of sin, and leads it by the way of repentance unto the fountain of Christ's blood, to wash it away through faith. By the reason of which false righteousness they were disobedient unto the righteousness of God, which is the forgiveness of sin in Christ's blood, and could not believe it; and so through fleshly interpreting the law, and false imagined righteousness, their hearts were hardened, and made as stony as clay in a hot furnace of fire, that they could

* The intricacies.

receive neither repentance, nor faith, nor any moisture of grace at all.

But the heathen Ninevites, though blinded with lusts, yet they were in those two points uncorrupt, and unhardened, and therefore, only with the preaching of Jonas, they came unto the knowledge of their sins, and confessed them, and repented truly, and turned every man from his evil deeds; and declared their sorrow of heart, and true repentance, with their deeds which they did out of faith and hope of forgiveness, chastising their bodies with prayer and fasting, and with taking all pleasures from the flesh; trusting, that as God was angry for their wickedness, even so should he forgive them of his mercy, if they repented, and forsook their misliving.

And in the last end of all, thou hast yet a goodly example of learning, to see how earthy Jonas is still, for all his trying in the whale's belly. He was so sorely displeased because the Ninevites perished not, that he was weary of his life, and wished after death, for very sorrow that he had lost the glory of his prophesying, in that his prophecy came not to pass. But God rebuked him with a likeness, saying, It grieves thine heart for the loss of a vile shrub, or spray, whereon thou bestowedst no labour or cost, neither was it thine handiwork; how much more then should mine heart grieve at the loss of so great a multitude of innocents as are in Nineveh, which are all my hands' work! Nay, Jonas, I am God over all, and Father as well unto the heathen as unto the Jews; and merciful to all, and warn ere I smite, neither threaten I so cruelly by any prophet, but that I will forgive, if they repent and ask mercy; neither on the other side, whatsoever I promise will I fulfil it, save for their sakes only who trust in me, and submit themselves to keep my laws of very love, as dutiful children.

On this manner to read the scripture is the right use thereof, and why the Holy Ghost caused it to be written. That is, that thou first seek out the law that God will have thee to do, interpreting it spiritually, without gloss or covering the brightness of Moses' face; so that thou feel in thine heart, that it is damnable sin before God, not to love thy neighbour who is thine enemy, as purely as Christ loved thee; and that not to love thy neighbour in thine heart is already to have committed all sin against him.

And therefore until that love be come, thou must

acknowledge unfeignedly that there is sin in the best deed thou doest: and it must earnestly grieve thine heart, and thou must wash all thy good deeds in Christ's blood, ere they can be pure, and an acceptable sacrifice unto God; and must desire God the Father, for his sake, to take thy deeds as worthy, and to pardon the imperfectness of them, and to give thee power to do them better, and with more fervent love.

And on the other side, thou must search diligently for the promises of mercy, which God hath promised thee again. Which two points, that is, the law spiritually interpreted, how that all is damnable sin that is not unfeigned love out of the ground and bottom of the heart, after the example of Christ's love to us, because we are all equally created and formed of one God our Father, and indifferently bought, and redeemed with one blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ; and that the promises are given unto a repenting soul, that thirsts and longs after them, of the pure and fatherly mercy of God, through our faith only, without any deserving of our deeds, or merits of our works, but for Christ's sake alone, and for the merits and deservings of his works, death, and passions that he suffered altogether for us, and not for himself—which two points I say, if they be written in thine heart, are the keys which so open all the scripture unto thee, that no creature can lock thee out, and with which thou shalt go in and out, and find pasture, and food every where. And if these lessons be not written in thine heart, then is all the scripture shut up, as a kernel in the shell, so that thou mayest read it, and comment on it, and rehearse all the stories of it, and dispute ably, and be a profound sophister, and yet understand not one jot thereof.

And thirdly, that thou take the stories and lives which are contained in the Bible, for sure and undoubted examples that God so will deal with us unto the world's end.

Herewith, reader, farewell, and be commended unto God, and unto the grace of his Spirit. And first see that thou stop not thine ears unto the calling of God, and harden not thine heart beguiled with fleshly interpreting of the law, and falsely imagined and hypocritish righteousness, lest the Ninevites rise with thee at the day of judgment, and condemn thee.

And secondly, if thou findest aught amiss, when thou seest thyself in the glass of God's word, think it necessary

wisdom to amend the same betimes, being admonished and warned by the example of other men, rather than tarry until thou be beaten also.

And thirdly, if it shall so befall, that the wild lusts of thy flesh shall blind thee, and carry thee quite away with them for a time: yet at the latter end, when the God of all mercy shall have compassed thee in on every side with temptations, tribulation, adversities, and cumbrance, to bring thee home again unto thine own heart, and to set thy sins, which thou wouldest fain so cover, and put out of mind with delectation of voluptuous pastimes, before the eyes of thy conscience: then call the faithful example of Jonas, and all like stories unto thy remembrance, and with Jonas turn unto thy Father that smote thee, not to cast thee away, but to lay a corrosive, and a fretting plaster unto the evil, that lay hid and fretted inwardly, to draw the disease out, and to make it appear, that thou mightest feel thy sickness, and the danger thereof, and come and receive the healing plaster of mercy.

And forget not that whatsoever example of mercy God hath showed since the beginning of the world, the same is promised thee, if thou wilt in like manner turn again, and receive it as they did, and with Jonas be convinced of thy sin and confess it, and acknowledge it unto thy Father.

And as the law which fretteth thy conscience is in thine heart, and is no outward thing, even so seek within thy heart the plaster of mercy, the promises of forgiveness in our Saviour Jesus Christ, according unto all the examples of mercy that are gone before.

And with Jonas let them that wait on vanities, and seek God here and there, and in every temple save in their hearts, go: and seek thou the testament of God in thine heart. For in thine heart is the word of the law, and in thine heart is the word of faith, in the promises of mercy in Jesus Christ. So that if thou confess with a repenting heart and knowledge, and surely believe that Jesus is Lord over all sin, thou art safe.

And finally, when the rage of thy conscience is ceased, and quieted with fast faith in the promises of mercy, then offer with Jonas the offering of praise and thanksgiving, and pay the vow of thy baptism; that God only saveth of his only mercy and goodness; that is, believe steadfastly, and declare constantly, that it is God only that smiteth, and God only that healeth; ascribing the cause of thy tribulation

unto thine own sin, and the cause of thy deliverance unto the mercy of God.

And beware of the leaven that saith we have power in our free-will, before the preaching of the gospel, to deserve grace, to keep the law of congruity, or that God is unrighteous. And say with John in the first, that as the law was given by Moses, even so grace to fulfil it is given by Christ. And when they say, our deeds with grace deserve heaven, say thou with Paul, (Rom. vi.) " that everlasting life is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, and that we be made sons by faith." (John i.) " And therefore heirs of God with Christ." (Rom. viii.) And say, that we receive all of God through faith, that follows repentance, and that we do not our works unto God, but either unto ourselves, to slay the sin that remains in the flesh, and to wax perfect; or unto our neighbours, who do as much for us again in other things. And when a man excels in gifts of grace, let him understand that they are given him, as well for his weak brethren, as for himself: as though all the bread be committed unto the panter,* yet for his fellows with him, which give their thanks unto their lord, and recompense the panter again with other kind of service in their offices. And when they say that Christ hath made no satisfaction for the sin we do after our baptism; say thou with the doctrine of Paul, that in our baptism we receive the merits of Christ's death through repentance and faith, of which two baptism is the sign. And though when we sin of frailty after our baptism, we receive the sign no more, yet we be renewed again through repentance, and faith in Christ's blood; of which twain, that sign of baptism, even continued among us in baptizing our young children, doth ever keep us in mind, and call us back again unto our profession if we be gone astray, and promises us forgiveness. Neither can actual sin be washed away with our works, but with Christ's blood; neither can there be any other sacrifice, or satisfaction to Godward for them, save Christ's blood. Forasmuch as we can do no works unto God, but receive only of his mercy with our repenting faith, through Jesus Christ our Lord and only Saviour: unto whom and unto God our Father through him, and unto his Holy Spirit, that only cleanseth, sanctifieth, and washeth us in the innocent blood of our redemption, be praise for ever. Amen.

* Keeper of the pantry.

A

LIVELY DESCRIPTION OF OUR JUSTIFICATION.*

MARK therefore, the way toward justifying, or forgiveness of sin, is the law. God causeth the law to be preached unto us and writeth it in our hearts, and maketh us by good reasons feel that the law is good, and ought to be kept, and that they which keep it not, are worthy to be damned. And on the other side, I feel that there is no power in me to keep the law, whereupon it would shortly follow that I should despair, if I were not shortly holpen. But God, who hath begun to cure me, and hath laid that corrosive unto my sores, goes forth in his cure, and setteth his Son Jesus before me, and all his passion and death, and saith to me, this is my dear Son, and he hath prayed for thee, and hath suffered all this for thee, and for his sake I will forgive thee all that thou hast done against this good law; and I will heal thy flesh, and teach thee to keep this law, if thou wilt learn. And I will bear with thee, and take all in good part that thou doest, till thou canst do better. And in the mean season, notwithstanding thy weakness, I will yet love thee no less than I do the angels in heaven, so thou wilt be diligent to learn. And I will assist thee, and keep and defend thee, and be thy shield, and care for thee.

And the heart here begins to mollify and soften, and to receive health, and believes the mercy of God, and, in believing, is saved from the fear of everlasting death, and is made sure of everlasting life; and then being overcome with this kindness, begins to love again, and to submit herself unto the laws of God, to learn them and to walk in them.

* Sir Thomas More wrote a dialogue in which he found much fault with Tindal's translation of the new testament; he also objected to many of the doctrines of truth taught by the reformers. Tindal wrote in reply an "Answer unto Sir Thomas More's Dialogue, wherein first he declareth what the church is, and giveth a reason of certain words which master More rebuketh in the translation of the new testament; after that he answereth particularly unto every chapter which seemeth to have any appearance of truth through all his four books." The motto prefixed was, "Awake thou that sleepest and stand up from death, and Christ shall give thee light." (Eph. v.) The whole of this treatise would not be interesting to readers in general at the present day; but the "lively description of our justification." here given, is too valuable to be omitted.

Note now the order; first God gives me light to see the goodness and righteousness of the law, and mine own sin and unrighteousness. Out of which knowledge springeth repentance. Now repentance teaches me not that the law is good, and I evil, but is a light which the Spirit of God hath given me, out of which light repentance springeth.

Then the same Spirit worketh in mine heart, trust, and confidence to believe the mercy of God and his truth, that he will do as he hath promised, which belief saveth me. And immediately out of that trust springeth love toward the law of God again. And whatsoever a man worketh of any other love than this, it pleases not God, nor is that love godly.

Now love does not receive this mercy, but faith only; out of which faith love springeth, by which love I pour out again upon my neighbour that goodness which I have received of God by faith. Hereof ye see that I cannot be justified without repentance, and yet repentance justifies me not. And hereof ye see that I cannot have a faith to be justified and saved; except love spring thereof immediately, and yet love justifies me not before God. For my natural love to God again, does not make me first see and feel the kindness of God in Christ, but faith through preaching. For we love not God first, to compel him to love again; but he loved us first, and gave his Son for us, that we might see love, and love again, saith St. John in his first epistle: which love of God to usward we receive by Christ through faith, saith Paul.

And this example have I set out for them in divers places, but their blind eyes have no power to see it, covetousness hath so blinded them. And when we say, Faith only justifies us; that is to say, faith only receiveth the mercy wherewith God justifies us and forgives us; we mean not faith which has no repentance, and faith which has no love unto the laws of God again, and unto good works, as wicked hypocrites falsely belie us.

For how then should we suffer, as we do, all misery, to call the blind and ignorant unto repentance and good works, which now do but consent unto all evil, and study mischief all day long, for all their preaching their justifying by good works? Let M. More improve this with his sophistry, and set forth his own doctrine, that we may see the reason of it and walk in light.

Hereof ye see what faith it is that justifies us. The

faith in Christ's blood, of a repenting heart toward the law, justifies us alone, and not all manner of faiths. Ye must understand therefore, that ye may see to come out of More's blind maze, that there are many faiths, and that all faiths are not one faith, though they all are called with one general name. There is an historical faith, without feeling in the heart, wherewith I may believe the whole history of the Bible, and yet not set mine heart earnestly thereto, taking it for the food of my soul, to learn to believe and trust God, to love him, to dread him, and fear him by the doctrine and examples thereof; but to seem learned, and to know the history, to dispute and make merchandise, as we have examples enough. And the faith wherewith a man doeth miracles is another gift than the faith of a repenting heart, to be saved through Christ's blood, and the one is no kin to the other, though M. More would have them so appear. Neither is the devil's faith, and the pope's faith, (wherewith they believe that there is a God, and that Christ is, and all the story of the Bible, and may yet stand with all wickedness and full consent to evil,) kin unto the faith of them that hate evil, and repent of their misdeeds, and acknowledge their sins, and are fled with full hope and trust of mercy unto the blood of Christ.

And when he saith, If faith certify our hearts that we are in the favour of God, and our sins forgiven, and become good, ere we do good works; as the tree must be first good, ere it bring forth good fruit, by Christ's doctrine; then we make good works but a shadow wherewith a man is never the better. Nay, sir, we make good works fruits, whereby our neighbour is the better, and whereby God is honoured, and our flesh tamed. And we make of them sure tokens whereby we know that our faith is no feigned imagination and dead opinion, made with captivating our understandings after the pope's traditions, but a lively thing wrought by the Holy Ghost.

And when he disputes that if they that have faith, have love unto the law, and purpose to fulfil it, then faith alone justifies not; how will he prove that argument? He juggles with this word "alone:" and would make the people believe that we said, how a bare faith that is without all other company, of repentance, love, and other virtues, yea, and without God's Spirit too, did justify us, so that we should not care to do good. But the scripture so takes

not "alone," nor do we so mean, as M. More knows well enough. When a horse bears a saddle and a man is therein, we may well say, that the horse only, and alone, bears the saddle, and is not helped of the man in bearing thereof. But he would make men understand that we meant, the horse bare the saddle empty, and no man therein; let him mark this, to see his ignorance, which, would that it were not coupled with malice. Every man that hath wit hath a will too, and then by M. More's argument, wit only gives not the light of understanding. Now the conclusion is false, and the contrary true. For the wit without help of the will gives the light of the understanding; neither does the will work at all, until the wit have determined this or that to be good or bad. Now what is faith, save a spiritual light of understanding, and an inward knowledge or feeling of mercy? Out of which knowledge love doth spring. But love brought me not that knowledge, for I knew it ere I loved. So that love in the process of nature, to dispute from the cause to the effect, helps not at all, to the feeling that God is merciful to me, no more than the loving heart, and kind behaviour of an obedient wife to her husband makes her see his love and kindness to her, for many such have unkind husbands. But by his kind deeds to her, does she see his love. Even so my love and deeds make me not see God's love to me in the process of nature; but his kind deeds to me, in that he gave his Son for me, make me see his love, and to love again.

Our love and good works make not God first love us, and change him from hate to love, as the Turk, Jew, and vain papists mean, but his love and deeds make us love, and change us from hate to love. For he loved us when we were evil, and his enemies, as Paul testifies in divers places; and he chose us, to make us good and to show us love, and to draw us to him, that we should love again.

The father loves his child, when it has no power to do good, and when it must be suffered to run after its own lusts without law, and he never loves it better than then, to make it better, and to show it love, to love again. If ye could see what is written in the first epistle of John, though all the other scripture were laid aside, ye should see all this.

And ye must understand, that we sometimes dispute forward, from the cause to the effect, and must beware that we are not therewith beguiled. We say, summer is

come, and therefore all is green, and dispute forward. For summer is the cause of the greenness. We say the trees are green, and therefore summer is come, and dispute backward from the effect to the cause. For the green trees make not summer, but make summer known. So we dispute backward—the man doth good deeds, and profitable unto his neighbour, he must therefore love God; he loves God, he must therefore have a true faith and see mercy.

And yet my works make not my love, nor my love my faith, nor my faith God's mercy; but contrary, God's mercy makes my faith, and my faith my love, and my love my works. And if the pope could see mercy, and work of love to his neighbour; and not sell his works to God for heaven, after M. More's doctrine, we needed not so to settle disputing of faith.

And when M. More alleges Paul to the Corinthians, to prove that faith may be without love, he proves nothing, but juggles only. He saith, it is evident by the words of Paul, that a man may have a faith to do miracles without love, and may give all his goods in alms without love, and his body to burn for the name of Christ, and all without charity. Well, I will not stick with him; he may so do, without charity, and without faith thereto. Then a man may have faith without faith. Yea, verily, because there are many differences of faith, as I have said, and not all faiths one faith. We read in the works of Cyprian, that there were martyrs who suffered martyrdom for the name of Christ, all the year long, and were tormented and healed again, and then brought forth afresh. Which martyrs believed as ye do, that the pain of their martyrdom should be a deserving, and merit enough, not only to deserve heaven for themselves, but to make satisfaction for the sins of other men thereto, and gave pardons of their merits, after the example of the pope's doctrine, and forgave the sins of other men, who had openly denied Christ, and wrote unto Cyprian, that he should receive those men that had denied Christ into the congregation again, at the satisfaction of their merits. For which pride, Cyprian wrote to them, and called them the devil's martyrs, and not God's. Those martyrs had a faith without faith. For had they believed that all mercy is given for Christ's blood-shedding, they would have sent other men thither, and would have suffered their own martyrdom for love of their neighbours only, to serve them, and to testify the truth of God in our

Saviour Jesus, unto the world, to save at the least some, that is, the elect, for whose sake Paul suffered all things, and not to win heaven. If I work for a worldly purpose, I get no reward in heaven: even so if I work for heaven or a higher place in heaven, I get there no reward. But I must do my work for the love of my neighbour, because he is my brother, and the price of Christ's blood, and because Christ hath deserved it, and desires it of me, and then my reward is great in heaven.

And all they which believe that their sins be forgiven them, and they received, as the scripture testifies, unto the inheritance of heaven for Christ's merits, the same love Christ, and their brethren for his sake; and do all things for their sakes' only; not once thinking of heaven when they work, but of their brethren's need. When they suffer themselves above might, then they comfort their soul with the remembrance of heaven, that this wretchedness shall have an end, and we shall have a thousand fold pleasures and rewards in heaven, not for the merits of our deservings, but given us freely for Christ's. And he that hath that love, hath the right faith, and he that hath that faith, hath the right love. For I cannot love my neighbour for Christ's sake, except I first believe that I have received such mercy of Christ. Nor can I believe that I have received such mercy of Christ, but I must love my neighbour for his sake, seeing that he so urgently desires me.

And when he alleges St. James, it is answered him in the Mammon,* and Augustine answers him. And St. James expounds himself. For he saith in the first chapter, God, which begat us of his own will with the word of truth, which word of truth is his promises of mercy and forgiveness in our Saviour Jesus, by which he begat us, gave us life, and made us a new creature through a fast faith. And James goes and rebukes the opinion and false faith of them that think it enough to be saved by, if they believe that there is but one God, and that Christ was born of a virgin, and a thousand things which a man may believe, and yet not believe in Christ, to be saved from sin through him. And that James speaks of another faith than at the beginning, appears by his example. The devils have faith, saith he: yea, but the devils have no faith that can repent of evil, or to believe in Christ to be saved through him, or that can love God and work his

* See page 77.

will of love. Now Paul speaks of a faith that is in Christ's blood, to be saved thereby, which works immediately through love of the benefit received. And James at the beginning speaks of a faith that abides trial, saying, The trying of your faith worketh, or causeth, patience; but the faith of the devils will abide no trying, for they will not work God's will, because they love him not. And in like manner is it of the faith of them that repent not, or that think themselves without sin. For except a man feel out of what danger Christ hath delivered him, he cannot love the work. And therefore James saith right, that no such faith that will not work, can justify a man.

And when Paul saith, Faith only justifieth; and James saith, That a man is justified by works and not by faith only, there is a great difference between Paul's only, and James's only. For Paul's only is to be understood, that faith justifies in the heart and before God, without help of works, yea, and ere I can work. For I must receive life through faith to work with, ere I can work. But James's only is thus to be understood, that faith does not so justify, that nothing justifies save faith. For deeds do justify also. But faith justifies in the heart and before God, and the deeds before the world only, and make the other seen; as ye may perceive by the scripture.

For Paul saith, (Rom. iv.) If Abraham have works, he hath whereof to rejoice, but not before God. For if Abraham had received those promises of deserving, then had it been Abraham's praise and not God's, as thou mayest see in the text; neither had God showed Abraham mercy and grace, but had only given him his duty and deserving. But in that Abraham received all the mercy that was showed him, freely through faith, out of the deservings of the Seed that was promised him, as thou mayest see by Genesis and by the gospel of John, where Christ testifies that Abraham saw his day and rejoiced, and of that joy doubtless he wrought, it is God's praise, and the glory of his mercy. And the same mayest thou see by James, when he saith, Abraham offered his son, and so was the scripture fulfilled, that Abraham believed, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness, and he was thereby made God's friend.

How was it fulfilled? Before God? Nay, it was fulfilled before God many years before, and he was God's friend many years before, even from the first appointment

that was made between God and him. Abraham received promises of all mercy, and believed and trusted God, and went and wrought out of that faith. But it was fulfilled before us who cannot see the heart, as James saith, I will show thee my faith out of my works, and as the angel said to Abraham, Now I know that thou dreadest God. Not but that he knew it before, but for us spake he that, who can see nothing in Abraham more than in other men, save by his works.

And what works meant James? Verily the works of mercy. As if a brother or a sister lack raiment or sustenance, and ye be not moved to compassion nor feel their diseases, what faith have ye then? No faith, be sure, that feeleth the mercy that is in Christ. For they that feel that, are merciful again and thankful. But look on the works of our spiritualty, which will not only be justified with works before the world, but also before God. They have had all christendom to rule this eight hundred years, and as they only are anointed in the head, so have they only been king and emperor, and have had all power in their hands, and have been the doers only, and the leaders of those shadows that have had the name of princes, and have led them whither they would, and have breathed into their brains what they listed. And they have wrought the world out of peace and unity, and every man out of his welfare; and are become alone well at ease, only free, only at liberty, only have all things and only do nought therefore, only lay on other men's backs and bear nought themselves. And the good works of them that wrought out of faith, and gave their goods and lands to find the poor, they devour them also alone. And what works preach they? Only those that are to them profitable, and whereby they reign in men's consciences as God; to offer, to give, to be prayed for, and to be delivered out of purgatory, and to redeem your sins of them, and to worship ceremonies, and to be shriven, and so forth.

And when M. More is come to himself, and saith, The first faith and the first justifying is given us without our deserving—God be thanked, and I would fain that he would describe me what he means by the second justifying. I know no more to do, than that when I have received all mercy and all forgiveness of Christ freely, to go and pour out the same upon my neighbour.

M. More saith, David lost not his faith when he

committed adultery. I answer, No, and therefore he could not continue in sin, but repented as soon as his fault was told him. But was he not reconciled by faith only, and not by deeds? Said he not, Have mercy on me, Lord, for thy great mercy, and for the multitude of thy mercies put away my sin? And again, Make me hear joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. That is, Let me hear thy voice that my sin is forgiven, and then I am safe and will rejoice. And afterwards he acknowledges that God delighteth not in sacrifices for sin, but that a troubled spirit and a broken heart is that which God requireth. And when the peace was made, he prays boldly and familiarly to God, that he would be good to Sion and Jerusalem, and saith that then last of all, when God hath forgiven us of mercy, and hath done us good for our evil, we shall offer sacrifice of thanks to him again. So that our deeds are but thanksgiving. When we have sinned, we go with a repenting heart unto Christ's blood, and there wash it off through faith.* And our deeds are but thanksgiving to God to help our neighbours at their need, for which our neighbours and each of them owe us as much again at our need. So that the testament or forgiveness of sins, is built upon faith in Christ's blood, and not on works. M. More will run to the pope for forgiveness. By what merits does the pope forgive? By Christ's. And Christ hath promised all his merits to them that repent and believe; he has not given them unto the pope to sell. And in your absolutions ye oft absolve without enjoining of penance. He must have a purpose to do good works, will ye say. That condition is set before him to do, out of the mercy that he hath received, and not to receive mercy out of them. But the papists cannot repent out of the heart. And therefore cannot feel the mercy that faith brings, and therefore cannot be merciful to their neighbours, to do their works for their sakes. But they feign a sorrow for their sin in which they ever continue, and so mourn for them in the morning, that they laugh in them ere mid-day again. And then they imagine to themselves popish deeds, to make satisfaction to God, and make an idol of him.

And finally, that good works, as to give alms and such

* When we have offended God, we must return quickly by repentance, and call upon God to hear us for Christ our Saviour's sake. *Fox.*

like, justify not of themselves, is manifest. For as the good who are taught of God, do them well, of very love to God and Christ, and of their neighbours for Christ's sake; even so the evil do them of vain glory and a false faith, wickedly, as we have examples in the pharisees; so that a man must be good ere he can do good. And so is it of the purpose to do them; one's purpose is good and another's evil; so that we must be good ere a good purpose come. Now then, to love the law of God, and to consent thereto, and to have it written in thine heart, and to profess it, so that thou art ready of thine own accord to do it and without compulsion, is to be righteous: that I grant, and that love may be called righteousness, before God, passive, and the life and quickness of the soul, passive. And so far as a man loves the law of God, so far he is righteous, and so much as he lacketh of love toward his neighbour, after the example of Christ, so much he lacketh of righteousness. And that which makes a man love the law of God, makes a man righteous, and justifies him effectively, and actually, and makes him alive as a workman, and cause efficient. Now what is it that makes a man to love? Verily not the deeds, for they follow and spring of love, if they be good. Neither the preaching of the law, for that quickens not the heart, (Gal. iii.) but causes wrath, (Rom. vi.) and utters sin only. (Rom. iii.) And therefore, Paul saith, that righteousness springs not out of the deeds of the law into the heart, as the Jews and the pope mean; but contrary, the deeds of the law spring out of the righteousness of the heart, if they be good. As when a father pronounces the law, that the child shall go to school, it saith Nay. For that killeth his heart, and all his lusts, so that he has no power to love it. But what makes his heart alive to love it? Verily, fair promises of love and kindness, that it shall have a gentle schoolmaster, and shall play enough, and shall have many gay things, and so forth. Even so the preaching of faith works love in our souls, and makes them alive, and draws our hearts to God. The mercy that we have in Christ makes us love only, and only bringeth the Spirit of life into our souls.

And therefore, saith Paul, we are justified by faith and by grace without deeds; that is, ere the deeds come. For faith only brings the Spirit of life, and delivers our souls from fear of damnation, which is in the law, and ever

maketh peace between God and us, as oft as there is any variance between us. And finally, when the peace is made between God and us, and all is forgiven through faith in Christ's blood, and we begin to love the law, we were never the nearer except faith went with us, to supply the lack of full love, in that we have promises, that the little we have is taken as of worth, and accepted till more come. And again, when our frailty has overthrown us, and fear of damnation has invaded our consciences, we were utterly lost, if faith were not by, to help us up again, in that we are promised that whensoever we repent of evil and come to the right way again, it shall be forgiven for Christ's sake. For when we are fallen, there is no testament made in works to come, that they shall save us. And therefore the works of repentance, or of the sacraments, can never quiet our consciences, and deliver us from fear of damnation.

And last of all, in temptation, tribulation, and adversities, we should perish daily, except faith went with us to deliver us, in that we have promises, that God will assist us, clothe us, feed us, and fight for us, and rid us out of the hands of our enemies. And thus the righteous lives ever by faith, even from faith to faith, that is, as soon as he is delivered out of one temptation another is set before him, to fight against, and to overcome through faith. The scripture saith, Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, and his sins hid, and unto whom the Lord reckons not unrighteousness. So that the only righteousness of him that can but sin, and hath nought of himself to make amends, is the forgiveness of sin, which faith only brings. And as far as we be unrighteous, faith only justifies us actively, and nothing else on our part. And as far as we have sinned, be in sin, or do sin, or shall sin, so far must faith in Christ's blood justify us only, and nothing else. To love, is to be righteous, so far as thou lovest, but not to make righteous, nor to make peace. To believe in Christ's blood with a repenting heart, is to make righteous, and the only making of peace and satisfaction toward God. And thus because terms be dark to them that be not expert and exercised, we always set out our meaning with clear examples, reporting ourselves unto the hearts and consciences of all men.

A

PROLOGUE

BY

WILLIAM TINDAL,

SHOWING

THE USE OF THE SCRIPTURE,

WHICH HE WROTE BEFORE THE FIVE BOOKS OF MOSES.

Prefixed to Tindal's translation of the Pentateuch, printed A. D. 1530.

THOUGH a man had a precious and a rich jewel, yet if he knew not the value thereof, nor wherefore it served, he were neither the better nor richer of a straw. Even so though we read the scripture, and babble of it ever so much, yet if we know not the use of it, and wherefore it was given, and what is therein to be sought, it profits us nothing at all. It is not enough, therefore, to read and talk of it only, but we must also desire God, day and night, instantly,* to open our eyes, and to make us understand and feel wherefore the scripture was given, that we may apply the medicine of the scripture, every man to his own sores. Unless we intend to be idle disputers, and brawlers about vain words, ever gnawing upon the bitter bark without, and never attaining unto the sweet pith within; and persecuting one another in defending of wicked imaginations, and phantasies of our own invention.

Paul, in the third chapter of the second epistle to Timothy, saith, "that the scripture is good to teach," for that is what men ought to teach, and not dreams of their own making, as the pope does; "and also to improve," for the scripture is the touch-stone that tries all doctrines, and by that we know the false from the true. And in the sixth to the Ephesians he calls it "the sword of the Spirit," because it kills hypocrites, and utters and improves their false inventions. And in the fifteenth to the Romans he saith, "All that are written, are written for our learning; that

* Urgently.

we, through patience and comfort of the scripture, might have hope." That is, the examples that are in the scripture comfort us in all our tribulations, and make us to put our trust in God, and patiently to abide his leisure. And in the tenth of the first to the Corinthians, he brings in examples of the scripture to fear us,* and to bridle the flesh, that we cast not the yoke of the law of God from off our necks, and fall to lusting and doing of evil.

So now the scripture is a light, and shows us the true way both what to do and what to hope for. And a defence from all error, and a comfort in adversity that we despair not, and it fears us in prosperity, that we sin not. Seek therefore in the scripture, as thou readest it, first the law, what God commands us to do; and secondly, the promises, which God promises us again, namely in Christ Jesus our Lord. Then seek examples, first of comfort, how God purgeth all them that submit themselves to walk in his ways, in the purgatory of tribulation, delivering them yet at the latter end, and never suffering any of them to perish that cleave fast to his promises. And, finally, note the examples which are written, to fear the flesh, that we sin not: that is, how God suffers the ungodly and wicked sinners that resist God, and refuse to follow him, to continue in their wickedness; ever waxing worse and worse, until their sin is so sorely increased, and so abominable, that if they should longer endure they would corrupt the very elect. But for the elect's sake God sends them preachers. Nevertheless, they harden their hearts against the truth, and God destroys them utterly, and begins the world anew.

This comfort shalt thou evermore find in the plain text and literal sense. Neither is there any story so homely, so rude, yea, or so vile, as it may seem outwardly, wherein is not exceeding great comfort. And when some, who seem to themselves to be great clerks,† say, They wot not what more profit is in many histories of the scripture, if they be read without an allegory, than in a tale of Robin-Hood: say thou, that they were written for our consolation and comfort, that we despair not, if such like happen unto us. We are not holier than Noah, though he were once drunk: neither better beloved than Jacob, though his own son defiled his bed. We are not holier than Lot, though his daughters through ignorance deceived him; nor,

* To cause us to fear. † Very learned.

peradventure, holier than those daughters. Neither are we holier than David, though he brake wedlock, and upon the same committed abominable murder. All those men have witness of the scripture that they pleased God, and were good men, both before those things befell them, and also after. Nevertheless such things happened them for our example: not that we should counterfeit their evil;* but if while we fight with ourselves, enforcing to walk in the law of God, as they did, we yet fall likewise, that we despair not, but come again to the laws of God, and take better hold.

We read, since the time of Christ's death, of virgins that have been defiled; and of martyrs that have been abused. Why? The judgments of God are bottomless. Such things have befallen partly for examples; partly, God through sin healeth sin. Pride can neither be healed, nor yet appear, but through such horrible deeds. Peradventure they were of the pope's sect, and rejoiced fleshly, thinking that heaven came by deeds, and not by Christ; and that the outward deed justified them and made them holy, and not the inward spirit received by faith, and the consent of heart unto the law of God.

As thou readest, therefore, think that every syllable pertains to thine own self, and suck out the pith of the scripture, and arm thyself against all assaults. First note with strong faith the power of God, in creating all of nought; then mark the grievous fall of Adam, and of us all in him, through the lightly regarding the commandment of God. In the fourth chapter God turns unto Abel, and then to his offering, but not to Cain and his offering: where thou seest that though the deeds of the evil appear outwardly as glorious as the deeds of the good; yet in the sight of God, who looketh on the heart, the deed is good because of the man, and not the man good because of his deed. In the sixth, God sends Noah to preach to the wicked, and gives them space to repent: they wax hardhearted, God brings them to nought, and yet saves Noah; even by the same water by which he destroyed them. Mark also what followed the pride of the building of the tower of Babel.

Consider how God sends forth Abraham out of his own country into a strange land, full of wicked people, and gave him but a bare promise with him, that he would bless him and defend him. Abraham believed, and that word saved and delivered him in all perils: so that we see how

* Not that we should imitate their evil actions.

that man's life is not maintained by bread only, as Christ saith, but much rather by believing the promises of God. Behold how soberly, and how circumspectly, both Abraham and also Isaac behaved themselves among the infidels. Abraham bought that which might have been given him for nought, to cut off occasion of complaint. Isaac, when his wells, which he had digged, were taken from him, gave room and resisted not. Moreover, they ear* and sow, and feed their cattle, and make confederations, and perpetual truce, and do all outward things; even as they do who have no faith, for God hath not made us to be idle in this world. Every man must work godly and truly, to the uttermost of the power that God has given him; and yet not trust therein, but in God's word or promise, and God will work with us, and bring that which we do to good effect: and then, when our power will extend no further, God's promises will work all alone.

How many things also resisted the promises of God to Jacob! And yet Jacob pleaded to God with his own promises, saying, "O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac! O Lord! who saidst unto me, Return unto thine own country, and unto the place where thou wast born, and I will do thee good; I am not worthy of the least of those mercies, nor of that truth which thou hast done to thy servant. I went out with a staff, and come home with two droves: deliver me out of the hands of my brother Esau, for I fear him greatly," &c. And God delivered him, and will likewise deliver all that call unto his promises with a repenting heart, were they ever so great sinners. Mark also the weak infirmities of the man. He loved one wife more than another, one son more than another. And see how God purgeth him. Esau threatens him; Laban beguiles him; the beloved wife is long barren; his daughter is defiled; his wife is defiled, and that of his own son. Rachel dies, Joseph is taken away, yea, and, as he supposed, rent of wild beasts. And yet how glorious was his end! Note the weakness of his children, yea and the sin of them, and how God through their own wickedness saved them. These examples teach us, that a man is not at once perfect, the first day he begins to live well. They that are strong, therefore, must suffer with the weak, and help to keep them in unity and peace, one with another, until they are stronger.

* Plough, (Gen. xiv. 6.)

Note what the brethren said when they were attached in Egypt: "We have verily sinned (said they) against our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul when he besought us, and would not hear him; and therefore is this tribulation come upon us." By which example thou seest how that conscience of evil doings finds men out at last. But namely, in tribulation and adversity; there temptation, and also desperation, yea, and the very pains of hell, find us out: there the soul feels the fierce wrath of God, and wishes mountains to fall on her, and to hide her, if it were possible, from the angry face of God.

Mark, also, how great evils follow of how little an occasion. Dinah goes forth alone only to see the daughters of the country, and how great mischief and trouble followed! Jacob loved but one son more than another, and how grievous murder followed in their hearts! These are examples for our learning, to teach us to walk warily and circumspectly in the world of weak people, that we give no man occasions of evil.

Finally, see what God promised Joseph in his dreams. Those promises accompanied him always, and went down with him even into the deep dungeon, and brought him up again, and never forsook him till all that was promised was fulfilled. These are examples written for our learning, as Paul saith, to teach us to trust in God in the strong fire of tribulation, and purgatory of our flesh. And those who submit themselves to follow God, should note and mark such things; for their learning and comfort is the fruit of the scripture, and the cause why it was written. And with such a purpose to read it, is the way to everlasting life, and to those joyful blessings that are promised unto all nations in the Seed of Abraham, which seed is Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom be honour and praise for ever, and unto God our Father through him. Amen.*

* Then follows "A table expounding certain words in the first book of Moses." Faith is explained to be "The believing of God's promises, and a sure trust in the goodness and truth of God; which faith justified Abraham, (Gen. xv.) and was the mother of all his good works which he afterward did, for faith is the goodness of all works in the sight of God. Good works are things of God's commandment, wrought in faith. And to sow a shoe at the commandment of God, to do thy neighbour service withal; with faith to be saved by Christ, as God promised us, is much better than to build an abbey, of thy own imagination, trusting to be saved by the feigned works of hypocrites."

A PROLOGUE

TO THE SECOND BOOK OF MOSES, CALLED

EXODUS.

By the preface upon Genesis thou mayest understand how to behave thyself in this book also, and in all other books of the scripture. Cleave unto the text and plain story, and endeavour thyself to search out the meaning of all that is described therein, and the true sense of all manner of speakings of the scripture; of proverbs, similitudes, and borrowed speech, and beware of subtle allegories.

And note every thing earnestly, as things pertaining unto thine own heart and soul.

For as God used himself unto them of the old testament, even so shall he unto the world's end use himself unto us which have received his holy scripture, and the testimony of his son Jesus. As God doth all things here for them that believe his promises, and hearken unto his commandments, and with patience cleave unto him, and walk with him: even so shall he do for us, if we receive the witness of Christ with a strong faith, and endure patiently, following his steps. And on the other side, as they that fell from the promise of God through unbelief, and from his law and ordinances, through impatience of their own lusts, were forsaken of God, and so perished; even so shall we, as many as do likewise, and as many as mock with the doctrine of Christ, and make a cloak of it to live fleshly, and to follow our lusts.

Note thereto how God is found true at the last; and how, when all is past remedy, and brought into desperation, he then fulfils his promises, and that by an abject and a cast-away, a despised, and a refused person; yea, and by a way impossible to believe.

The cause of all the captivity of God's people is this: the world ever hates them for their faith and trust which they have in God: but in vain, till they fall from the faith of the promises and love of the law and ordinances of God, and put their trust in holy deeds of their own finding, and live altogether at their own lust and pleasure, without regard

to God, or respect to their neighbour. Then God forsakes us, and sends us into captivity for our dishonouring of his name, and despising of our neighbour. But the world persecutes us for our faith in Christ only, as the pope now doth, and not for our wicked living. For in his kingdom thou mayest quietly, and with license, and under a protection, do whatsoever abomination thy heart lusts; but God persecutes us because we abuse his holy testament, and because, when we know the truth, we follow it not.

Note, also, the mighty hand of the Lord, how he plays with his adversaries, and provokes them, and stirs them up a little and a little, and delivers not his people in an hour; that both the patience of his elect, and also the worldly wit and wily policy of the wicked, wherewith they do fight against God, might appear.

Mark the long-suffering and soft patience of Moses, and how he loves the people, and is ever between the wrath of God and them, and is ready to live and die with them, and to be put out of the book that God had written, for their sakes, (as Paul for his brethren, Romans ix.) and how he takes his own wrongs patiently, and never avenges himself. And make not Moses a figure of Christ with Rochester;* but an example unto all princes, and to all that are in authority, how to rule unto God's pleasure, and unto their neighbour's profit. For there is not a more perfect life in this world, both to the honour of God and profit of his neighbour, nor yet a greater cross, than to rule christianly. And of Aaron also, see that thou make no figure of Christ, until he come unto his sacrificing; but an example unto all preachers of God's word, that they add nothing unto God's word, nor take ought therefrom.

Note also, how God sends his promise to the people, and Moses confirms it with miracles, and the people believe. But when temptation comes, they fall into unbelief, and few continue standing. Where thou seest that all are not christians that will be so called, and that the cross tries the true from the feigned; for if the cross were not, Christ would have disciples enough. Whereof also thou seest, what an excellent gift of God true faith is, and how impossible to be had without the Spirit of God. For it is above all natural power, that a man, in time of temptation, when God scourgeth him, should believe then steadfastly how that God loveth him, and careth for him, and

* Like Fisher, bishop of Rochester.

has prepared all good things for him, and that the scourging is an earnest that God hath elected and chosen him.

Note how oft Moses stirred them up to believe and trust in God, putting them in remembrance always in time of temptation, of the miracles and wonders that God had formerly wrought in their eye-sight. How diligently also forbade he all that might withdraw their hearts from God! He commanded to put nought to God's word, to take nought therefrom; to do only that which is right in the sight of the Lord; that they should make no manner of image, to kneel down before it; yea, that they should make no altar of hewed stone, for fear of images; to flee the heathen idolaters utterly, and to destroy their idols, and cut down their groves where they worshipped; and that they should not take the daughters of them unto their sons, nor give their daughters to the sons of them. And that whosoever moved any of them to worship false gods, howsoever nigh of kin he were, they must accuse him, and bring him to death. Yea, and wheresoever they heard of man, woman, or city that worshipped false gods, they should slay them, and destroy the city for ever, and not build it again. And all because they should worship nothing but God, nor put confidence in any thing, save in his word.

Yea, and how he warns to beware of witchcraft, sorcery, enchantment, necromancy, and all crafts of the devil, and of dreamers, soothsayers, and of miracle-doers, to destroy his word, and that they should suffer none such to live.

Thou wilt haply say, They tell a man the truth. What then? God wills that we care not to know what shall come. He will have us to care only to keep his commandments, and to commit all that shall befall unto him. He hath promised to care for us, and to keep us from all evil. All things are in his hand; he can remedy all things; and will, for his truth's sake, if we pray him. In his promises only will he have us trust, and there rest, and seek no further.

How also he provokes them to love; ever rehearsing the benefits of God done to them already, and the godly promises that were to come! And what goodly laws of love he gives, to help one another; and that a man should not hate his neighbour in his heart, but love him as himself. (Levit. xix.) And what a charge he gives in every place over the poor and needy; over the stranger, friendless, and widow! And when he desires to show mercy,

he rehearses the benefits of God done to them at their need, that they might see a cause, at the least way in God, to show mercy of very love unto their neighbours at their need.

Also there is no law so simple in appearance, throughout all the five books of Moses, but there is a great reason for the making thereof, if a man search diligently. As that a man is forbid to seethe a kid in his mother's milk, moves us unto compassion, and to be pitiful. As also that a man should not offer the sire or dam and the young, both in one day. (Levit. xxii.) For it might seem a cruel thing, inasmuch as his mother's milk is, as it were, his blood; wherefore God will not have him sod therein; but will have a man show courtesy upon the very beasts. As in another place he commands that we muzzle not the ox that treadeth out the corn, (which manner of threshing is used in hot countries,) and that because we should much rather be liberal and kind unto men that do us service. Or haply, God would have no such wanton meat used among his people. For the kid of itself is nourishing, and the goat's milk is restorative; and both together might be too rank, and therefore forbidden, or some other like cause there was.

Of the ceremonies, sacrifices, and tabernacle, with all its glory and pomp, understand that they were not permitted only, but also commanded of God, to lead the people in the shadows of Moses and in the night of the old testament, until the light of Christ and day of the new testament were come. As children are led in the fantasies of youth until the discretion of man's age come upon them. And all was done to keep them from idolatry.

The tabernacle was ordained to the intent they might have a place appointed them to do their sacrifices openly in the sight of the people, and namely, of the priests which waited thereon; that it might be seen that they did all things according to God's word, and not after the idolatry of their own imagination. And the costliness of the tabernacle, and the beauty also pertaining thereunto, that they should see nothing so beautiful among the heathen, but that they should see more beautiful and wonderful things at home; because they should not be moved to follow them.

And in like manner the divers fashions of sacrifices and ceremonies were to occupy their minds, that they should have no lust to follow the heathen; and the multitude of

them was, that they should have so much to do in keeping them, that they should have no leisure to imagine others of their own—yea, and that God's word thereby might be in all that they did, that they might have their faith and trust in God, which he cannot have that follows either his own inventions, or traditions of men's making, without God's word.

Finally: God hath two testaments, the old and the new. The old testament is those temporal promises which God made the children of Israel, of a good land, and that he would defend them; and of wealth and prosperity, and of temporal blessings, of which thou readest in all the law of Moses; but especially Levit. xxvi. and Deut. xxviii. Also the avoiding of all threatenings and curses, of which thou readest likewise every where, but especially in the two books above rehearsed; and the avoiding of all punishment ordained for the transgressors of the law.

And the old testament was built altogether upon the keeping of the law and ceremonies, and was the reward of keeping of them in this life only, and reached no farther than this life and this world: as thou readest, Levit. xviii. "A man that doeth them shall live therein;" which text Paul rehearseth, Romans x. and Galatians iii. That is, He that keepeth them shall have this life glorious, according to all the promises and blessings of the law, and shall avoid both all temporal punishment of the law, with all the threatenings and cursings also. For neither the law, even of the ten commandments, nor yet the ceremonies, justified in the heart before God, or purified unto the life to come. Insomuch, that Moses at his death, even forty years after the law and ceremonies were given, complains, saying, God hath not given you an heart to understand, nor eyes to see, nor ears to hear unto this day. As though he had said, God hath given you ceremonies, but ye know not the use of them; and hath given you a law, but hath not written it in your hearts.

Wherefore serveth the law then, if it gives us no power to do the law? Paul answers, That it was given to utter* sin only, and to make it appear. As a corrosive is laid unto an old sore, not to heal it, but to stir it up, and make the disease alive, that a man might feel in what jeopardy he is, and how nigh death, though not aware, and to make a way for the healing plaster.

* Shew, make manifest.

Even so saith Paul, (Galatians iii.) The law was given because of transgression, (that is, to make the sin alive, that it might be felt and seen,) until the seed came, unto whom it was promised: that is to say, until the children of faith came, or until Christ came, that seed in whom God promised Abraham that all nations of the world should be blessed.

That is, the law was given to utter sin, death, damnation, and curse, and to drive us unto Christ, in whom forgiveness, life, justifying, and blessings were promised; that we might see so great love of God to usward in Christ, that we, henceforth overcome with kindness, might love again, and of love keep the commandments.

Now he that goes about to quiet his conscience, and to justify himself with the law, does but heal his wounds with fretting corrosives. And he that goes about to purchase grace with ceremonies, doth but suck the ale pole* to quench his thirst, inasmuch as the ceremonies were not given to justify the heart, but to signify the justifying, and forgiveness that is in Christ's blood.

Of the ceremonies, that they justify not, thou readest Hebrews x. It is impossible that sin should be done away with the blood of oxen and goats. And of the law thou readest, Gal. iii. If there had been a law given that could have quickened or given life, then had righteousness, or justifying, come by the law indeed. Now the law not only quickens not the heart, but also wounds it with conscience of sin, and ministers death and damnation unto her. (2 Cor. iii.) So that she must needs die and be damned, except she find other remedy. So far it is off that she is justified, or holpen by the law.

The New Testament is those everlasting promises which are made us in Christ the Lord, throughout all the scripture. And that testament is built on faith, and not in works. For it is not said of that testament, He that worketh shall live; but "He that believeth shall live:" as thou readest, John iii. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that none which believe in him should perish, but have life everlasting.

And when this testament is preached and believed, the Spirit enters the heart, and quickens it, and gives her life, and justifies her. The Spirit also makes the law a lively thing in the heart, so that a man brings forth good works

* The pole or sign before the ale-house.

of his own accord, without compulsion of the law, without fear of threatenings, or cursings; yea, and without any manner of respect or love unto any temporal pleasure, but of the very power of the Spirit, received through faith, as thou readest, John i. He gave them power to be the sons of God, in that they believed on his name.

And of that power they work; so that he which hath the Spirit of Christ is now no more a child: he neither learneth nor worketh any longer for pain of the rod, or for fear of imaginary monsters or pleasure of apples, but does all things of his own courage: as Christ saith, John vii. He that believeth on me shall have rivers of living waters flowing out of his belly. That is, all good works, and all gifts of grace spring out of him naturally, and by their own accord. Thou needest not to wrest good works out of him, as a man would wring verjuice out of crabs; nay, they flow naturally out of him, as springs out of rocks.

The new testament was ever, even from the beginning of the world. For there were always promises of Christ to come by faith, in which promises the elect were then justified inwardly before God, as outwardly before the world, by keeping of the law and ceremonies.

And in conclusion, as thou seest blessings, or cursings follow the breaking or keeping of the law of Moses; even so, naturally, do the blessings or cursings follow the breaking or keeping of the law of nature, out of which spring all our temporal laws. So that when the people keep the temporal laws of their land, temporal prosperity, and all manner of such temporal blessings (as thou readest of in Moses) do accompany them, and fall upon them. And, contrariwise, when they sin unpunished, and when the rulers have no respect unto equity or honesty, then God sends his curse among them, as hunger, dearth, murrain, pestilence, war, oppression, with strange and wonderful diseases, and new kinds of misfortune and evil luck.

If any man ask me, seeing that faith justifies me, Why I work? I answer, Love compels me. For as long as my soul feels what love God hath showed me in Christ, I cannot but love God again, and his will and commandments, and of love work them, nor can they seem hard unto me. I think not myself better for my working, nor seek heaven, nor a higher place in heaven, because of it. For a christian works to make his weak brother more perfect, and not to seek a higher place in heaven. I compare not

myself with him that works not. No, he that works not to-day, shall have grace to turn, and to work to-morrow; and in the mean time I pity him, and pray for him. If I had wrought the will of God these thousand years, and another had wrought the will of the devil as long, and he this day turn and be as well willing to suffer with Christ as I, he hath this day overtaken me, and is as far come as I, and shall have as much reward as I; and I envy him not, but rejoice most of all as of lost treasure found. For if I be of God, I have these thousand years suffered to win him to come and praise the name of God with me. These thousand years I have prayed, sorrowed, longed, sighed, and sought for that which I have this day found; and therefore I rejoice with all my might, and praise God, for his grace and mercy.*

* The reader will have observed that Tindal often dwells upon the scriptural doctrine respecting faith and works; there is, however, another passage in his Obedience of a Christian Man which ought not to be omitted, and may be inserted in this place, as the subject is connected with the observations in the text.

"Remember that Christ is the end of all things. He only is our resting place, and he is our peace. (Eph. ii.) For as there is no salvation in any other name, so is there no peace in any other name. Thou shalt never have rest in thy soul, neither shall the worm of conscience ever cease to gnaw thine heart, till thou come at Christ; till thou hear the glad tidings, how that God for his sake hath forgiven thee all freely. If thou trust in thy works there is no rest. Thou shalt think, I have not done enough. Have I done it with so great love as I should do? Was I so glad in doing as I would be to receive help at my need? I have left this or that undone, and such like. If thou trust in confession, then shalt thou think, Have I told all? Have I told all the circumstances? Did I repent enough? Had I as great sorrow in my repentance for my sins as I had pleasure in doing of them? Likewise in our holy pardons and pilgrimages gettest thou no rest. For thou seest that the very gods themselves which sell their pardon so good cheap, or somewhiles give them freely for glory sake, trust not therein themselves. They build colleges, and make perpetuities to be prayed for for ever, and lade the lips of their beadsmen or chaplains with so many masses, and dirges, and so long service, that I have known some that have bid the devil take their founders' souls, for very impatience and weariness of so painful labour.

"As pertaining to good deeds, therefore, do the best thou canst, and desire God to give thee strength to do better daily; but in Christ put thy trust, and in the pardon and promises that God hath made thee for his sake, and on that ROCK build thine house, and there dwell. For there only shalt thou be sure from all storms and tempests, and from all wily assaults of our wicked spirits, which study with all falsehood to undermine us. And the God of all mercy give thee grace so to do, unto whom be glory for ever. Amen."

A PROLOGUE

INTO THE THIRD BOOK OF MOSES, CALLED

LEVITICUS.

THE ceremonies which are described in this book were chiefly ordained of God, to occupy the minds of that people the Israelites, and to keep them from serving God after the imagination of their blind zeal and good intent—that their consciences might be stablished, and they sure that they pleased God therein; which were impossible, if a man did of his own head that which was not commanded of God, nor depended of any appointment made between him and God. Such ceremonies were unto them as an ABC, to learn to spell and read; and as a nurse, to feed them with milk and pap, and to speak unto them after their own capacity, and to lisp the words unto them, according as the babes and children of that age might sound them again. For all that were before Christ were in the infancy and childhood of the world, and saw that sun which we see openly, only through a cloud, and had but feeble and weak imaginations of Christ, as children have of men's deeds: a few prophets excepted, who yet described him unto others in sacrifices and ceremonies, likenesses, riddles, proverbs, and dark and strange speaking, until the full age came when God would show him openly unto the whole world, and deliver them from their shadows and cloud-light, and the heathen out of their dead sleep of stark blind ignorance. And as the shades vanish away at the coming of the light, even so do the ceremonies and sacrifices at the coming of Christ; and are henceforth no more necessary than a token left in remembrance of a bargain, is necessary when the bargain is fulfilled. And though they seem merely childish, yet they are not altogether fruitless; as the puppets,* and twenty manner of trifles, which mothers permit unto their young children, are not all in vain. For albeit such fantasies are permitted to satisfy the children's desires, yet as they are the mother's gift, and are done in place and time at her commandment, they keep the children in awe, and make them know the mother, and also make them more apt against a stronger age to obey in things of greater earnest.

* Dolls.

And moreover, though sacrifices and ceremonies can be no ground or foundation to build upon—that is, though we can prove nought with them—yet when we have once found out Christ and his mysteries, then we may borrow figures, that is to say allegories, similitudes, or examples to open Christ, and the secrets of God hid in Christ, even unto the quick, and can declare them more lively and sensibly with them than with all the words of the world. For similitudes have more virtue and power with them than bare words, and lead a man's understanding further into the pith and marrow and spiritual understanding of the thing, than all the words that can be imagined. And though also all the ceremonies and sacrifices have, as it were, a star-light of Christ, yet some there are that have, as it were, the light of the broad day, a little before the sun rising; and express him, and the circumstances and virtue of his death so plainly, as if we should play his passion on a scaffold, or in a stage play, openly before the eyes of the people;* as the scape-goat, the brazen serpent, the ox burnt without the host, the passover lamb, &c. Insomuch that I am fully persuaded, and cannot but believe that God had showed Moses the secrets of Christ, and the very manner of his death beforehand, and commanded him to ordain them for the confirmation of our faith, who are now in the clear daylight. And I believe also that the prophets, who followed Moses to confirm his prophecies, and to maintain his doctrine unto Christ's coming, were moved by such things to search further of Christ's secrets. And though God would not have the secrets of Christ generally known, save unto a few familiar friends, which in that infancy he made of man's understanding to help the other babes; yet as they had a general promise that one of the seed of Abraham should come and bless them, even so they had a general faith that God would by the same man save them, though they wist not by what means; as the very apostles, when it was oft told them, yet could never comprehend it, till it was fulfilled in deed.

And beyond all this, their sacrifices and ceremonies, as

* The subjects of the mysteries, or stage plays, of those times usually were taken from scripture. The congregation of protestants in London in queen Mary's reign, had met for worship under semblance of attending one of these representations, in December 1557, when Rough, their minister, and others, were taken, and shortly after burned. See *Fox.*

far as the promises annexed unto them extend, so far they saved them and justified them and stood them in the same stead as our sacraments do us; not by the power of the sacrifice or deed itself, but by the virtue of the faith in the promise, which the sacrifice or ceremony preached, and whereof it was a token or sign. For the ceremonies and sacrifices were left with them, and commanded them to keep the promise in remembrance, and to wake up their faith. As it is not enough to send many on errands, and to tell them what they shall do; but they must have a remembrance with them, though it be but a ring of a rush about one of their fingers. And as it is not enough to make a bargain with words only, but we must put thereto an oath, and give earnest to confirm the faith of the person with whom it is made. And in like manner if a man promise, whatsoever trifle it be, it is not believed except he hold up his finger also; such is the weakness of the world. And therefore Christ himself used oftentimes divers ceremonies in curing the sick, to stir up their faith withal. As for an example—It was not the blood of the lamb that saved them in Egypt, when the angel smote the Egyptians; but the mercy of God, and his truth, whereof that blood was a token and remembrance, to stir up their faith withal. For though God make a promise, yet it saves none finally, but them that long for it, and pray God with a strong faith to fulfil it, for his mercy and truth only, and acknowledge their unworthiness. And even so our sacraments, if they be truly ministered, preach Christ unto us, and lead our faith unto Christ; by which faith our sins are done away, and not by the deed or work of the sacrament. For as it was impossible that the blood of calves should put away sin; even so is it impossible that the water of the river should wash our hearts. Nevertheless, the sacraments cleanse us, and absolve us of our sins as the priests do, in preaching of repentance and faith, for which cause either of them were ordained; but if they preach not, whether it be the priest or the sacrament, so profit they not.

And if a man allege Christ, (John iii.) saying, Except a man be born again of water and of the Holy Ghost, he cannot see the kingdom of God, and will therefore that the Holy Ghost be present in the water, and therefore that the very deed or work puts away sin; then I will send him unto Paul, who asked the Galatians, Whether they received the Holy Ghost by the deeds of the law, or by

preaching of faith? and there concluded that the Holy Ghost accompanieth the preaching of faith, and with the word of faith enters the heart and purgeth it; which thou mayest also understand by St. Paul saying, Ye are born anew out of the water through the word. So now if baptism preach to me the washing in Christ's blood, so doth the Holy Ghost accompany it; and that deed of preaching, through faith, doth put away my sins. For the Holy Ghost is no dumb God, nor God that goeth a mumming.* If a man say of the sacrament of Christ's body and blood, that it is a sacrifice as well for the dead as for the quick, and therefore the very deed itself justifies and puts away sin; I answer, that a sacrifice is the slaying of the body of a beast, or a man: wherefore, if it be a sacrifice, then is Christ's body there slain, and his blood there shed; but that is not so. And therefore it is properly no sacrifice, but a sacrament, and a memorial of that everlasting sacrifice, once for all, which he offered upon the cross now fifteen hundred years ago, and which preaches only unto them that are alive. And as for them that are dead, it is as profitable unto them as a candle in a lanthern without light, is unto them that walk by the way in a dark night; and as the gospel sung in Latin is unto them that understand it not at all, and as a sermon preached to him that is dead, and hears it not.† It preaches unto them that are alive only; for they that are dead, if they died in the faith which that sacrament preaches, they are safe, and are past all jeopardy. For when they were alive their hearts loved the law of God, and therefore sinned not, and were sorry that their members sinned, and ever moved to sin, and therefore, through faith, it was forgiven them. And now their sinful members are dead, so that they can now sin no more; wherefore it is unto them that be dead neither sacrament nor sacrifice. But under the pretence of their soul-health, it is a servant unto the holy covetousness of our spiritualty, and an extortioner, and a builder of abbeys, colleges, chauntries, and cathedrals, with false gotten goods; a pickpurse, a robber, and a bottomless bag.

Some man would haply say, that the prayers of the

* A masker, a mute person in a masquerade. Tindal also alludes to the mummery of the priest when officiating in the sacrifice of the mass, or Romish sacrament of the altar.

† Mass is frequently said for the deliverance of souls from purgatory, and in the canon or service of the mass there is especial commemoration of the dead, or prayer for them.

mass help much; not the living only, but also the dead. Of the hot fire of their fervent prayer, which consumes faster than all the world is able to bring sacrifice, I have said sufficiently in other places. Howbeit, it is not possible to bring me to believe, that the prayer which helps its own master unto no virtue, should purchase me the forgiveness of sins. If I saw that their prayers had obtained them grace to live such a life as God's word did not rebuke, then could I soon be borne in hand that whatsoever they asked of God, their prayers should not be in vain. But now what good can he wish me in his prayers, that envies me Christ, the food and the life of my soul? What good can he wish me, whose heart cleaves asunder for pain, when I am taught to repent of my evil?

Furthermore, because few know the use of the old testament, and the most part think it nothing necessary but to make allegories, which they feign every man after his own brain at wild adventure, without any certain rule; therefore though I have spoken of them in another place, yet, lest the book come not to all men's hands that shall read this, I will speak of them here also a word or twain.

We had need to take heed every where that we be not beguiled with false allegories, whether they be drawn out of the New Testament or the Old, either out of any other story, or of the creatures of the world, but namely in this book. Here a man had need to put on all his spectacles, and to arm himself against invisible spirits.

First, allegories prove nothing (and by allegories understand examples or similitudes borrowed of strange matters, and of another thing than thou entreatest of). As though circumcision be a figure of baptism, yet thou canst not prove baptism by circumcision. For this argument were very feeble; the Israelites were circumcised, therefore we must be baptized. And in like manner, though the offering of Isaac were a figure or example of the resurrection, yet is this argument nought—Abraham would have offered Isaac, but God delivered him from death, therefore we shall rise again, and so forth in all other.

But the very use of allegories is to declare and open a text, that it may be the better perceived and understood. As when I have a clear text of Christ and the apostles, that I must be baptized, then I may borrow an example of circumcision to express the nature, power, and fruit, or effect of baptism. For as circumcision was unto them a

common badge, signifying that they were all soldiers of God, to war his war, and separating them from all other nations, disobedient unto God; even so baptism is our common badge, and sure earnest and perpetual memorial that we pertain unto Christ, and are separated from all that are not Christ's. And as circumcision was a token, certifying them that they were received into the favour of God, and their sins forgiven them, even so baptism certified us that we are washed in the blood of Christ, and received to favour for his sake; and as circumcision signified unto them the cutting away of their own lusts, and slaying of their free-will, as they call it, to follow the will of God; even so baptism signifies unto us repentance, and the mortifying of our unruly members and body of sin, to walk in a new life, and so forth.

And likewise, though the saving of Noah, and of them that were with him in the ship, through water, is a figure, that is to say, an example and likeness of baptism, as Peter makes it, (1 Pet. iii.) yet I cannot prove baptism therewith, but describe it only. For as the ship saved them in the water through faith, in that they believed God, and as the others that would not believe Noah perished; even so baptism saves us through the word of faith which it preaches, when all the world of the unbelieving perish. And Paul (1 Cor. x.) makes the sea and the cloud a figure of baptism, by which, and a thousand more, I might declare it, but not prove it. Paul also, in the same place, makes the rock out of which Moses brought water unto the children of Israel, a figure or example of Christ; not to prove Christ, (for that were impossible,) but to describe Christ only. Even as Christ himself (John iii.) borrows a similitude or figure of the brazen serpent to lead Nicodemus from his earthly imagination into the spiritual understanding of Christ, saying: As Moses lifted up a serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up, that none that believe in him perish, but have everlasting life. By which similitude, the virtue of Christ's death is better described than thou couldest declare it with a thousand words. For as those murmurers against God, as soon as they repented, were healed of their deadly wounds, through looking on the brazen serpent only, without medicine or any other help, yea, and without any other reason but that God hath said it should be so, and

not to murmur again, but to leave their murmuring: even so all that repent, and believe in Christ, are saved from everlasting death, of pure grace, without, and before their good works, and not to sin again, but to fight against sin, and henceforth to sin no more.

Even so with the ceremonies of this book thou canst prove nothing, save describe, and declare only the putting away of our sins through the death of Christ. For Christ is Aaron and Aaron's sons, and all that offer the sacrifice to purge sin. And Christ is all manner of offering that is offered; he is the ox, the sheep, the goat, the kid, and lamb; he is the ox that is burnt without the host, and the scape-goat that carried all the sin of the people away into the wilderness. For as they purged the people from their worldly uncleannesses through blood of the sacrifices, even so doth Christ purge us from the uncleannesses of everlasting death with his own blood; and as their worldly sins could no otherwise be purged than by blood of sacrifices, even so can our sins be no otherwise forgiven than through the blood of Christ. All the deeds in the world, save the blood of Christ, can purchase no forgiveness of sins; for our deeds do but help our neighbour, and mortify the flesh, and help that we sin no more; but if we have sinned, it must be freely forgiven through the blood of Christ, or remain for ever.

And in like manner, of the lepers thou canst prove nothing. Thou canst never conjure out confession thence, howbeit thou hast a handsome example there to open the binding and loosing of our priests, with the key of God's word; for as they made no man a leper, even so ours have no power to command any man to be in sin, or to go to purgatory or hell. And therefore, (inasmuch as binding and loosing is one power,) as those priests healed no man, even so ours cannot of their invisible and dumb power drive any man's sins away, or deliver him from hell, or feigned purgatory. Howbeit, if they preached God's word purely, which is the authority that Christ gave them, then they should bind and loose, kill and make alive again, make unclean and clean again, and send to hell and fetch thence again, so mighty is God's word. For if they preached the law of God, they should bind the consciences of sinners with the bonds of the pains of hell, and bring them unto repentance. And then if they preached unto

them the mercy that is in Christ, they should loose them, and quiet their raging consciences, and certify them of the favour of God, and that their sins be forgiven.

Finally, beware of allegories; for there is not a more handsome or apt thing to beguile withal than an allegory; nor a more subtle and pestilent thing in the world to persuade a false matter than an allegory. And contrariwise; there is not a better, more vehement, or mightier thing to make a man understand withal than an allegory. For allegories make a man quick witted, and print wisdom in him; and make it to abide, where bare words go but in at the one ear, and out at the other. As this, with such like sayings: "Put salt to all your sacrifices;" instead of this sentence, "Do all your deeds with discretion," grateth and biteth (if it be understood) more than plain words. And when I say, instead of these words, "Boast not yourself of your good deeds," "Eat not the blood, nor the fat of your sacrifice;" there is as great difference between them as there is distance between heaven and earth. For the life and beauty of all good deeds is of God, and we are but the carrion-lean, we are only the instrument whereby God worketh only, but the power is his. As God created Paul anew, poured his wisdom into him, gave him might, and promised him that his grace should never fail him, &c. and all without deservings, except that murdering the saints, and making them curse and rail on Christ, be meritorious. Now, as it is death to eat the blood or fat of any sacrifice, is it not, think ye, damnable to rob God of his honour, and to glorify myself with his honour?

THE PROLOGUE

INTO THE FOURTH BOOK OF MOSES, CALLED

NUMERI.

In the second and third book they received the law; and in this fourth they begin to work and to practise. Of which practising you see many good examples of unbelief, and what free-will doeth, when she taketh in hand to keep the law of her own power, without help of faith in

the promises of God—how she leaveth her masters' carcasses by the way in the wilderness, and bringeth them not into the land of rest. Why could they not enter in? Because of their unbelief. (Heb. iii.) For had they believed, so had they been under grace, and their old sins had been forgiven them; and power should have been given them to have fulfilled the law thenceforth, and they should have been kept from all temptations that had been too strong for them. For it is written, (John i.) He gave them power to be the sons of God, through believing in his name. Now to be the son of God is to love God and his commandments, and to walk in his way after the example of his Son, Christ. But these people took upon them to work without faith, as thou seest in the xivth of this book, where they would fight, and also did, without the word of promise; even when they were warned that they should not. And in the xvith again, they would please God with their holy, faithless works (for where God's word is not there can be no faith); but the fire of God consumed their holy works, as it did Nadab and Abihu. (Levit. x.) And from these unbelievers turn thine eyes unto the pharisees, who before the coming of Christ in his flesh, had laid the foundation of free-will after the same example. Whereon they built holy works after their own imagination, without faith of the word, so fervently, that for the great zeal of them, they slew the King of all holy works, and the Lord of free-will, who only through his grace maketh the will free, and looseth her from bondage of sin, and giveth her love and desire unto the laws of God, and power to fulfil them. And so through their holy works done by the power of free-will, they excluded themselves out of the holy rest of forgiveness of sins, by faith in the blood of Christ.

Concerning vows, whereof thou readest in the xxxth chapter, there may be many questions; whereunto I answer shortly, that we ought to put salt to all our offerings; that is, we ought to minister knowledge in all our works, and to do nothing whereof we cannot give a reason out of God's words. We now are in the daylight, and all the secrets of God, and all his counsel and will is opened unto us, and He that was promised should come and bless us, is come already, and hath shed his blood for us, and hath blessed us with all manner of blessings, and hath obtained all grace for us, and in him we have all. Wherefore God

henceforth will receive no more sacrifices of beasts of us, as thou readest, Heb. x. If thou burn unto God the blood or fat of beasts, to obtain forgiveness of sins thereby, or that God should the better hear thy request, then thou dost wrong unto the blood of Christ, and Christ unto thee is dead in vain. For in him God hath promised not forgiveness of sins only, but also whatsoever we ask to keep us from sin and temptation withal. If thou repent not of thy sin, it is impossible that thou shouldest believe that Christ had delivered thee from the danger thereof. If thou believe not that Christ hath delivered thee, it is impossible that thou shouldest love God's commandments. If thou love not the commandments, Christ's Spirit is not in thee, which is the earnest of forgiveness of sin, and of salvation.

For scripture teaches, first repentance, then faith in Christ, that for his sake, sin is forgiven to them that repent; then good works, which are nothing save the commandment of God only. And the commandments are nothing else, save the helping of our neighbours at their need, and the taming of our members, that they might be pure also, as the heart is pure through hate of vice and love of virtue, as God's word teaches us, which works must proceed out of the faith: that is, I must do them for the love which I have to God, for that great mercy which he hath showed me in Christ, or else I do them not in the sight of God. And that I faint not in the pain of the slaying of the sin that is in my flesh, mine help is the promise of the assistance of the power of God, and the comfort of the reward to come; which reward I ascribe unto the goodness, mercy, and truth of the Promiser, who hath chosen me, called me, taught me, and given me the earnest thereof; and not unto the merits of my doings, or sufferings. For all that I do and suffer, is but the way to the reward, and not the deserving thereof.*

* A considerable part of this prologue, relating to the monastic orders and vows, has been omitted.

A PROLOGUE

INTO THE FIFTH BOOK OF MOSES, CALLED

DEUTERONOMY.

This is a book worthy to be read in, day and night, and never to be out of hand. For it is the most excellent of all the books of Moses. It is easy also and light, and a very pure gospel, that is, a preaching of faith and love; deducing the love to God out of faith, and the love of a man's neighbour out of the love of God. Herein also thou mayest learn right meditation or contemplation, which is nothing else save the calling to mind, and a repeating in the heart, of the glorious and wonderful deeds of God, and of his terrible handling of his enemies, and merciful entreating of them that come when he calleth them, which this book doth, and almost nothing else.

In the four first chapters Moses rehearses the benefits of God done unto them, to provoke them to love; and his mighty deeds done above all natural power, and beyond all natural capacity of faith, that they might believe God, and trust in him, and in his strength. And thirdly he rehearses the fierce plagues of God upon his enemies, and on those who through impatience and unbelief fell from him; partly to tame and abate the appetites of the flesh which alway fight against the Spirit, and partly to bridle the wild raging lusts of those in whom was no Spirit; that though they had no power to do good of love, yet at the least, they should abstain from outward evil, for fear of wrath and cruel vengeance which should fall upon them, and shortly find them out, if they cast up God's nurture, and run at riot beyond his laws and ordinances.

Moreover he charges them to put nought to, nor take aught away from God's words, but to be diligent only to keep them in remembrance, and in the heart, and to teach their children for fear of forgetting. And to beware either

of making imagery, or of bowing themselves unto images, saying, Ye saw no image when God spake unto you, but heard a voice only, and that voice keep, and thereunto cleave, for it is your life and it shall save you. And finally if, as the frailty of all flesh is, they shall have fallen from God, and he have brought them into trouble, adversity, and cumbrance and all necessity; yet if they repent and turn, he promises them, that God shall remember his mercy, and receive them to grace again.

In the fifth chapter Moses repeats the ten commandments; and that they might see a cause to do them of love, he bids them remember that they were bound in Egypt, and how God delivered them with a mighty hand, and a stretched out arm, to serve him, and to keep his commandments; as Paul saith that we are bought with Christ's blood, and therefore are his servants, and not our own, and ought to seek his will and honour only, and to love and serve one another for his sake.

In the sixth he sets out the fountain of all commandments—that is, that they believe there is but one God who doeth all, and therefore ought only to be loved with all the heart, all the soul, and all the might. For love only is the fulfilling of the commandments, as Paul also saith unto the Romans and Galatians likewise. He warns them also that they forget not the commandments, but teach them their children, and show their children also how God delivered them out of the bondage of the Egyptians, to serve him and his commandments, that the children might see a cause to work of love likewise.

The seventh is altogether of faith: he removes all occasions that might withdraw them from the faith, and pulls them also from all confidence in themselves, and stirs them up to trust in God, boldly and only.

Of the eighth chapter thou seest that the cause of temptation is, that a man might see his own heart. For when I am brought into that extremity, that I must either suffer or forsake God, then I shall feel how much I believe and trust in him, and how much I love him. In like manner, if my brother do me evil for my good, then if I love him when there is no cause in him, I see that my love was of God, and even so if I then hate him, I feel and perceive that my love was but worldly; and finally he stirs them to the faith and love of God, and drives them from all confidence in their ownselves.

In the ninth also he moves them unto faith, and to put their trust in God, and draws them from confidence of themselves, by rehearsing all the wickedness which they had wrought, from the first day he knew them unto that same day. And in the end he repeats how he besought God in Horeb, and overcame him with prayer, where thou mayest learn the right manner to pray.

In the tenth he reckons up the pith of all laws, and the keeping of the law in the heart; which is to fear God, love him, and serve him with all the heart, soul, and might, and keep his commandments of love. And he shows a reason why they should do that—even because God is Lord of heaven and earth, and hath also done all for them of his own goodness, without their deserving. And then out of the love unto God, he brings the love unto a man's neighbour, saying, God is Lord above all lords, and loveth all his servants indifferently, as well the poor and feeble, and the stranger, as the rich and mighty, and therefore willeth that we love the poor and the stranger. And he adds a cause, For ye were strangers, and God delivered you, and hath brought you unto a land where ye be at home. Love the stranger therefore for his sake.

In the eleventh he exhorts them to love and fear God, and rehearses the terrible deeds of God upon his enemies, and on them that rebelled against him. And he testifies unto them both what will follow, if they love and fear God, and what also if they despise him, and break his commandments.

In the twelfth he commands to put out of the way all that might be an occasion to hurt the faith, and forbids to do aught after their own minds, or to alter the word of God.

In the thirteenth he forbids to hearken unto aught save unto God's word; no, though he who counsels the contrary should come with miracles, as Paul saith unto the Galatians.

In the fourteenth, the beasts are forbidden, partly for uncleanness of them, and partly to cause hate between the heathen and them, that they should have no conversation together, in that one abhorred what the other ate. Unto the fifteenth chapter all pertain unto faith and love chiefly, and in this fifteenth, he begins to treat more specially of things pertaining unto the commonwealth, and equity, and exhorts unto the love of a man's neighbour. And in the sixteenth, among other things, he forgets not the same.

And in the seventeenth he treats of right and equity chiefly, insomuch that when he looks unto faith and unto the punishment of idolaters, he yet ends in a law of love and equity; forbidding to condemn any man under less than two witnesses at the least, and commands to bring the trespasser unto the open gate of the city, where all men go in and out, that all men might hear the cause and see that he had but right. But the pope has found a better way; even to oppose him without any accuser, and that secretly, that no man know whether he have right or no, either hear his articles or answer; for fear lest the people should search whether it were so or no.

In the eighteenth he forbids all false and devilish crafts that hurt true faith. Moreover, because the people could not hear the voice of the law spoken to them in fire, he promises them another prophet to bring them better tidings, which was spoken of Christ our Saviour.

The nineteenth, and unto the end of the twenty-seventh, is almost altogether of love unto our neighbours, and of laws of equity and honesty, with now and then a respect unto faith.

The twenty-eighth is a terrible chapter, and to be trembled at: a christian man's heart might well bleed for sorrow at the reading of it, for fear of the wrath that is like to come upon us, according unto all the curses which thou there readest. For according unto these curses hath God dealt with all nations, after they were fallen into the abominations of blindness.

The twenty-ninth is alike terrible, with a godly lesson in the end, that we should leave searching of God's secrets, and give diligence to walk according to that he hath opened unto us. For the keeping of the commandments of God teaches wisdom; as thou mayest see in the same chapter, where Moses saith, Keep the commandments, that ye may understand what ye ought to do. But to search God's secrets blinds a man, as is well proved by the swarms of our sophisters, whose wise books now when we look in the scripture, are found but full of foolishness.

PROLOGUES

UPON

THE GOSPELS.

From the edition of Tindal's translation of the Testament,

PRINTED A. D. 1533.

Prologue upon the Gospel of St. Matthew.

Here hast thou, most dear reader, the New Testament, or covenant made with us of God in Christ's blood, which I have looked over again, now at the last, with all diligence, and compared it with the Greek, and have weeded out of it many faults which lack of help at the beginning, and oversight did sow therein. If aught seem changed, or not altogether agreeing with the Greek, let the finder of the fault consider the Hebrew phrase, or manner of speech left in the Greek words, whose preterperfect tense and present tense are oft both one, and the future tense is the optative mood also, and the future tense oft the imperative mood in the active voice, and in the passive ever. Likewise person for person, number for number, and interrogation for a conditional, and such like is with the Hebrews a common usage. I have also in many places set light* in the margin to understand the text by. If any man find faults either with the translation, or aught beside, (which is easier for many to do than so well to have translated it themselves of their own understanding, at the beginning without an ensample,) to the same it shall be lawful to translate it themselves, and to put what they please thereto. If I shall perceive, either by myself, or by information of other, that aught has escaped me, or might more plainly have been translated, I will shortly after cause it to be amended. Howbeit, in many places, methinks it better to put a declaration in the margin, than to run too far from the text. And in many places where the text seemeth at the first hard to be understood, yet the circumstances before and after, and often reading together, make it plain enough.

Moreover, because the kingdom of heaven, which is the

* An interpretation.

scripture and word of God, may be so locked up that he which readeth it or heareth it cannot understand it, as Christ testifies that the scribes and pharisees had so shut it up, (Matt. xxiii.) and had taken away the key of knowledge, (Luke xi.) that the Jews who thought themselves within, were so locked out, and are so to this day, that they can understand no sentence of the scripture, unto their salvation, though they can rehearse the texts every where and dispute thereof as subtily as the popish doctors of Dunces dark learning,* who with their sophistry served us as the pharisees did the Jews.

Therefore, that I might be found faithful to my Father and Lord, in distributing unto my brethren and fellows of one faith their due and necessary food, so dressing it and seasoning it, that the weak stomachs may receive it also, and be the better for it; I thought it my duty, most dear reader, to warn thee before, and to show thee the right way in, and to give thee the true key to open it, and to arm thee against false prophets, and malicious hypocrites; whose perpetual study is to blind the scripture with glosses, and there to lock it up, where it should save the soul; and to make us shoot at a wrong mark, to put our trust in those things that profit their bellies only, and slay our souls.

The right way, yea, and the only way, to understand the scripture unto salvation, is that we earnestly and above all things, search for the profession of our baptism, or covenants made between God and us. As for an example, Christ saith, (Matt. v.) Happy are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Lo, here God hath made a covenant with us, to be merciful unto us, if we will be merciful one to another; so that the man who showeth mercy unto his neighbour, may be bold to trust in God for mercy, at all needs. And contrariwise, judgment without mercy shall be to him that showeth not mercy. So now, if he that showeth no mercy, trust in God for mercy, his faith is carnal and worldly, and but vain presumption: for God hath promised mercy only to the merciful. And therefore the merciless have not God's word that they shall have mercy, but contrariwise, that they shall have judgment without mercy. And, (Matt. vi.) If ye shall forgive men their faults, your heavenly Father shall forgive you; but and if ye shall not forgive men their faults, no more shall your Father forgive you your faults.

* Duns Scotus and other scholastic divines.

Here also by the virtue and strength of this covenant, wherewith God of his mercy hath bound himself to us unworthy, he that forgiveth his neighbour may be bold, when he returneth and amendeth, to believe and trust in God for remission of whatsoever he hath done amiss. And contrariwise, he that will not forgive, cannot but despair of forgiveness in the end, and fear judgment without mercy.

The general covenant, wherein all others are comprehended and included, is this, If we meek ourselves* to God, to keep all his laws, after the example of Christ, then God hath bound himself unto us, to keep and make good all the mercies promised in Christ in all the scripture.

All the whole law which was given to utter our corrupt nature, is comprehended in the ten commandments. And the ten commandments are comprehended in these two, Love God and thy neighbour. And he that loveth his neighbour in God and Christ, fulfilleth these two, and consequently the ten, and finally all the other. Now if we love our neighbours in God and Christ, that is, if we be loving, kind, and merciful to them, because God hath created them unto his likeness, and Christ hath redeemed them and bought them with his blood, then may we be bold to trust in God, through Christ and his deserving, for all mercy. For God hath promised and bound himself to us, to show us all mercy, and to be a Father almighty to us, so that we shall not need to fear the power of all our adversaries.

Now if any man that submitteth not himself to keep the commandments, do think that he hath any faith in God, the same man's faith is vain, worldly, damnable, devilish, and plain presumption, as is above said, and is no faith that can justify, or be accepted before God. And that it is that James meaneth in his epistle. For how can a man believe, saith Paul, without a preacher. (Rom x.) Now read all the scripture, and see where God sent any to preach mercy to any, save unto them only that repent, and turn to God with all their hearts, to keep his commandments. Unto the disobedient, that will not turn, is threatened wrath, vengeance, and damnation, according to all the terrible acts and fearful examples of the bible.

Faith now in God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, according to the covenants and appointment made between God and us, is our salvation. Wherefore I have

* Humble ourselves.

ever noted the covenants in the margins, and also the promises. Moreover, where thou findest a promise, and no covenant expressed therewith, there must thou understand a covenant, that we, when we be received to grace, know it to be our duty to keep the law. As for an example, when the scripture saith, (Matt. vii.) Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; it is to be understood, that if when thy neighbour ask, seek, or knock unto thee, thou then shew him the same mercy which thou desirest of God, then hath God bound himself to help thee again, and else not.

Also ye see that two things are required to be in a christian man. The first is a steadfast faith and trust in almighty God, to obtain all the mercy that he hath promised us, through the deserving and merits of Christ's blood only, without any respect to our own works. And the other is, that we forsake evil and turn to God, to keep his laws, and to fight against ourselves and our corrupt nature perpetually, that we may do the will of God, every day better.

This have I said, most dear reader, to warn thee lest thou shouldest be deceived, and shouldest not only read the scriptures in vain and to no profit, but also unto thy greater condemnation. For the nature of God's word is, that whosoever reads it, or hears it reasoned and disputed before him, it will begin immediately to make him every day better and better, till he be grown into a perfect man in the knowledge of Christ and love of the law of God; or else make him worse and worse, till he be hardened that he openly resist the Spirit of God, and then blaspheme after the example of Pharaoh, Korah, Abiram, Balaam, Judas, Simon Magus, and such others. This to be even so, the words of Christ (John iii.) do well confirm, This is condemnation, saith he, the light is come into the world, but the men loved darkness more than light, for their deeds were evil. Behold, when the light of God's word cometh to a man, whether he read it or hear it preached or testified, and he yet have no love thereto, to fashion his life thereafter, but consenteth still unto his old deeds of ignorance, then beginneth his just damnation immediately, and he is henceforth without excuse, in that he refused mercy offered him. For God offereth mercy upon the condition that he will mend his living, but he will not come under the covenant; and from that hour forward he waxeth worse and

worse, God taking his Spirit of mercy and grace from him, for his unthankfulness' sake. And Paul writes, (Romans i.) that the heathen, because when they knew God, they had no desire to honour him with godly living, therefore God poured his wrath upon them, and took his Spirit from them, and gave them up to their own heart's lusts, to serve sin, from iniquity to iniquity, till they were thoroughly hardened and past repentance. And Pharaoh, because when the word of God was in his country, and God's people scattered throughout all his land, and yet he neither loved them nor it; therefore God gave him up, and in taking his Spirit of grace from him, so hardened his heart with covetousness, that afterward no miracle could convert him. Hereunto pertaineth the parable of the talents, (Matt. xxv.) The Lord commandeth the talent to be taken away from the evil and slothful servant, and to bind him hand and foot, and to cast him into utter darkness, and to give the talent unto him that had ten, saying, To all that have, more shall be given, but from him that hath not, that which he hath shall be taken from him. That is to say, he that hath a good heart towards the word of God, and to garnish it with godly living, and to testify it to others, the same shall increase daily more and more in the grace of Christ. But he that loveth it not, to live thereafter and to edify others, the same shall lose the grace of true knowledge, and be blinded again, and every day wax worse and worse, and blinder and blinder, till he be an utter enemy of the word of God, and his heart so hardened, that it shall be impossible to convert him. And (Luke xv.) the servant that knoweth his master's will, and prepareth not himself, shall be beaten with many stripes, that is, shall have greater damnation. And (Matt. vii.) all that hear the word of God, and do not thereafter, build on sand; that is, as the foundation laid on sand cannot resist violence of water, but is undermined and overthrown, even so the faith of them that have no desire nor love to the law of God, being builded upon the sand of their own imaginations, and not on the rock of God's word, according to his covenants, turneth to desperation in time of tribulation, and when God cometh to judge.

And the vineyard (Matt. xxi.) planted and hired out to the husbandmen who would not render to the lord of the fruit in due time, and therefore it was taken from them,

and hired out to others, confirms the same. For Christ saith to the Jews, The kingdom of heaven shall be taken from you and given to a nation that will bring forth the fruits thereof, as it is come to pass. For the Jews have lost the spiritual knowledge of God, and of his commandments, and also all the scripture, so that they can understand nothing godly. And the door is so locked up, that all their knocking is in vain, though many of them take great pains for God's sake. And (Luke xiii.) the fig-tree that beareth no fruit, is commanded to be plucked up. And finally, hereto pertaineth with infinite others, the terrible parable of the unclean spirit, (Luke xi.) who after he is cast out, when he cometh and findeth his house swept and garnished, taketh to him seven worse than himself, and cometh and entereth in and dwelleth there, and so is the end of the man worse than the beginning. The Jews, they had cleansed themselves with God's word from all outward idolatry, and worshipping of idols, but their hearts remained still faithless to Godward, and toward his mercy and truth, and therefore also without love and desire to his law, and to their neighbours for his sake; and through false trust in their own works (to which heresy the child of perdition, the wicked bishop of Rome with his lawyers, hath brought us christians) were more abominable idolaters than before, and became ten times worse in the end than at the beginning. For the first idolatry was soon espied and easy to be rebuked of the prophets by the scripture; but the latter is more subtle to beguile withal, and a hundred times more difficult to be weeded out of men's hearts. This also is a conclusion, than which there is nothing more certain or more proved by the testimony and examples of the scripture,—that if any who favours the word of God, be so weak that he cannot chasten his flesh, him will the Lord chastise and scourge every day, sharper and sharper with tribulation and misfortune, that nothing shall prosper with him, but all shall go against him, whatever he takes in hand; and the Lord will visit him with poverty, with sicknesses, and diseases, and shall plague him with plague upon plague, each more loathsome, terrible, and fearful than the other, till he be at utter defiance with his flesh. Let us, therefore, that have now at this time our eyes opened again, through the tender mercy of God, keep a mean. Let us so put our trust in the mercy of God through Christ, that we know it to be

our duty to keep the law of God, and to love our neighbours for their Father's sake who created them, and for their Lord's sake who redeemed them, and bought them so dearly with his blood. Let us walk in the fear of God, and have our eyes open unto both parts of God's covenants, being certified that none shall be partaker of the mercy save he that will fight against the flesh to keep the law. And let us arm ourselves with this remembrance, that as Christ's works justify from sin, and set us in the favour of God, so our own deeds, through working of the Spirit of God, help us to continue in the favour and the grace into which Christ hath brought us, and that we can no longer continue in favour and grace than our hearts are set to keep the law.

Furthermore, concerning the law of God, this is a general conclusion, that the whole law, whether they be ceremonies, sacrifices, yea, or sacraments either, or precepts of equity between man and man throughout all degrees of the world, all were given for our profit and necessity only, and not for any need that God hath of our keeping them, or that his joy is increased thereby, or that the deed, for the deed itself, doth please him. That is, all that God requireth of us when we be at one with him, and do put our trust in him, and love him, is, that we love every man his neighbour, to pity him, and to have compassion on him in all his needs, and to be merciful unto him. This to be even as Christ testifieth in the seventh of Matthew. This is the law and the prophets. That is, to do as thou wouldest be done to, according I mean to the doctrine of scripture, and not to do that which thou wouldest not have done to thee, is all that the law requireth and the prophets. And Paul to the Romans (xiii.) affirmeth also, that love is the fulfilling of the law, and that he who loveth, doth of his own accord all that the law requireth. And (1 Tim. i.) Paul saith, that the love of a pure heart and good conscience and faith unfeigned, is the end and fulfilling of the law. For faith unfeigned in Christ's blood, causeth to love for Christ's sake, which love is the only pure love and the only cause of a good conscience. For then is the conscience pure when the eye looketh to Christ in all her deeds, to do them for his sake, and not for her own singular advantage, or any other wicked purpose. And John, both in his gospel and also in his epistles, never speaketh of any other law, than to

love one another purely, affiming that we have God himself dwelling in us, and all that God desireth, if we love one another.

Seeing then that faith to God, and love and mercifulness to our neighbour, is all that the law requireth, of necessity the law must be understood and interpreted by them; so that all inferior laws are to be kept and observed, as long as they be servants to faith and love, and then to be broken immediately, if through any occasion they hurt either the faith which we should have to Godward, in the confidence of Christ's blood, or the love which we owe to our neighbours for Christ's sake And therefore, when the blind pharisees murmured and grudged at him and his disciples, that they brake the Sabbath-day, and traditions of the elders, and that he himself did eat with publicans and sinners, he answered, (Matt. ix.) alleging Esaias the prophet, Go rather and learn what this meaneth, I require mercy, and not sacrifice. And, (Matt. xii.) O that ye wist* what this meaneth, I require mercy and not sacrifice. For only love and mercifulness understandeth the law, and nothing else. And he that hath not that written in his heart, shall never understand the law; no, though all the angels of heaven went about to teach him. And he who hath that graven in his heart, shall not only understand the law, but also shall do of his own inclination all that is required of the law, though no law had been given; as all mothers do of themselves, without law, unto their children, all that can be required by any law: love overcoming all pain, grief, tediousness, or loathsomeness. And even so, no doubt, if we had continued in our first state of innocence, we should ever have fulfilled the law, without compulsion of the law. And because the law (which is a doctrine that through teaching every man his duty, doth utter† our corrupt nature) is sufficiently described by Moses, therefore little mention is made thereof in the New Testament, save of love only, wherein all the law is included; as seldom mention is made of the New Testament in the old law, save here and there are promises made unto them, that Christ should come and bless them and deliver them, and that the Gospel and New Testament should be preached and published unto all nations.

The Gospel is glad tidings of mercy and grace, and that our corrupt nature shall be healed again for Christ's sake,

* Knew. † Set forth.

and for the merits of his deservings only, yet on that condition, that we will turn to God, to learn to keep his laws spiritually, that is to say, of love for his sake, and will also suffer the curing of our infirmities. The New Testament is as much to say as a new covenant. The Old Testament is an old temporal covenant, made between God and the carnal children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; otherwise called Israel, upon the deeds and the observing of a temporal law, where the reward of the keeping is temporal life and prosperity in the land of Canaan, and the breaking is rewarded with temporal death and punishment. But the New Testament is an everlasting covenant made unto the children of God, through faith in Christ, upon the deservings of Christ; where eternal life is promised to all that believe, and death to all that are unbelieving. My deeds, if I keep the law, are rewarded with temporal promises of this life; but if I believe in Christ, Christ's deeds have purchased for me the eternal promise of the everlasting life. If I commit nothing worthy of death, I deserve to my reward that no man kill me; if I hurt no man, I am worthy that no man hurt me. If I help my neighbour, I am worthy that he help me again, &c. So that with outward deeds, with which I serve other men, I deserve that other men do the like to me in this world, and they extend no further. But Christ's deeds extend to life everlasting unto all that believe, &c.

These are sufficient in this place concerning the law and the gospel, New Testament and Old; so that as there is but one God, one Christ, one faith, one baptism, even so understand thou that there is but one Gospel, though many write it, and many preach it. For all preach the same Christ, and bring the same glad tidings. And thereto Paul's epistles with the gospel of John, and his first epistle, and the first epistle of Saint Peter, are most pure gospel, and most plainly and richly describe the glory of the grace of Christ. If ye require more of the law, seek in the prologue to the Romans, and in other places where it is sufficiently treated of.

Concerning this word REPENTANCE, or as they used, "penance," the Hebrew hath in the Old Testament generally, (sob) turn, or be converted. For which, the translation that we take for St. Jerome's,* hath for the most

* The Vulgate

part (converti) to turn, to be converted, and sometimes (agere penitentiam.) And the Greek, in the New Testament, hath perpetually (metanoeo) to turn in the heart and mind, and to come to a right knowledge, and to a man's right wit again. For which (metanoeo) St. Jerome's translation hath sometimes (ago penitentiam) I do repent. Sometimes (peniteo) I repent, sometimes (peniteor) I am repentant; sometimes (habeo penitentiam) I have repentance; sometimes (pœnitet me) it repenteth me. And Erasmus uses much this word (resipisco) I come to myself, or to my right mind again. And the very sense and signification both of the Hebrew and also of the Greek word is, to be converted and turn to God with all the heart, to know his will, and to live according to his laws; and to be cured of our corrupt nature with the oil of his Spirit, and wine of obedience to his doctrine. Which conversion or turning, if it be unfeigned, these four do accompany it and are included therein.

Confession, not in the priest's ear, for that is but man's invention, but to God in the heart, and before all the congregation of God; that we are sinners and sinful, and that our whole nature is corrupt and inclined to sin and all unrighteousness, and therefore evil, wicked, and damnable, and his law holy and just, by which our sinful nature is rebuked. And also to our neighbours, if we have offended any person particularly. Then *contrition,* sorrowfulness that we are such damnable sinners, and not only have sinned, but are wholly inclined to sin still. Thirdly, *faith,* (of which our old doctors have made no mention at all in the description of their penance) that God for Christ's sake, doth forgive us, and receive us to mercy, and is at one with us, and will heal our corrupt nature. And fourthly *satisfaction,* or amends making, not to God with holy works, but to my neighbour whom I have hurt, and the congregation of God, whom I have offended, if any open crime be found in me; and submitting of a man's self unto the congregation or church of Christ, and to the officers of the same to have his life corrected and governed henceforth of them, according to the true doctrine of the church of Christ. And note this—that as satisfaction or amends making is counted righteousness before the world, and a purging of sin; so that the world when I have made full amends hath no further to complain—even so faith in Christ's blood is counted righteousness and purging of all sin before God.

Moreover, he that sinneth against his brother, sinneth

also against his Father, almighty God ; and as the sin committed against his brother is purged before the world with making amends or asking forgiveness, even so is the sin committed against God, purged through faith in Christ's blood only. For Christ saith, (John viii.) Except ye believe that I am he, ye shall die in your sins ; that is to say, if ye think that there is any other sacrifice or satisfaction toward God, than me, ye ever remain in sin before God, howsoever righteous ye appear before the world. Wherefore now, whether ye call this (metonoia) repentance, conversion, or turning again to God, either amending, &c. ; or whether ye say, Repent, be converted, turn to God, amend your living, or what ye please, I am content, so ye understand what is meant thereby, as I have now declared.

A Prologue made upon the Gospel of Saint John.

What John was, is manifest by the three first evangelists. First, Christ's apostle, and that one of the chief. Then, Christ's nigh kinsman, and for his singular innocence and softness singularly beloved, and of singular familiarity with Christ, and ever one of the three witnesses of most secret things. The cause of his writing, was certain heresies that arose in his time, namely two ; of which one denied Christ to be very God, and the other to be very man, and to be come in the very flesh and nature of man. Against which two heresies, he wrote both his gospel and also his first epistle. And in the beginning of his gospel, he saith, that the Word or thing was at the beginning, and was with God, and was also very God ; and that all things were created by it ; and that it was also made flesh, that is to say, became very man ; and He dwelt among us, saith he, and we saw his glory. And in the beginning of his epistle, he saith, We show you of the thing that was from the beginning, which also we heard, saw with our eyes, and our hands handled. And again, We show you everlasting life which was with the Father, and appeared to us, and we heard and saw it, &c. In that he saith that it was from the beginning, and that it was eternal life, and that it was with God, he affirms him to be very God. And that he saith, We heard, saw, and felt, he witnesses that he was very man also. John also wrote last, and therefore touched not the history that the others had compiled. But he wrote most of faith, and promises, and of the sermons of Christ.

A PROLOGUE

UPON THE EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL TO THE

ROMANS.*

FORASMUCH as this epistle is the principal and most excellent part of the new testament and most pure evangelion, that is to say, glad tidings and that we call gospel, and also is a light and a way in unto the whole scripture, I think it meet that every christian man not only know it, by heart and without book, but also exercise himself therein evermore, continually, as with the daily bread of the soul. No man verily can read it too often, or study it too well; for the more it is studied, the easier it is, the more it is chewed, the pleasanter it is, and the more groundly† it is searched, the more precious the things which are found in it—so great treasure of spiritual things lies hid therein. I will therefore bestow my labour and diligence, through this little preface or prologue, to prepare a way in thereunto, so far forth as God shall give me grace, that it may be the better understood of every man; for it hath been hitherto evil darkened with glosses, and wonderful dreams of sophisters, that no man could discern the intent and meaning of it, which nevertheless of itself, is a bright light, and sufficient to give light unto all the scripture.

First, We must mark diligently the manner of speaking of the apostle, and above all things, know what Paul means by these words: the law, sin, grace, faith, righteousness, flesh, spirit, and such like, or else read thou it ever so oft, thou shalt but lose thy labour. This word LAW must not be understood here after the common manner, and to use Paul's term, after the manner of men, or after man's ways; as

* In this prologue Tindal has embodied Luther's preface to the epistle to the Romans, which he translated with a few variations, enlarging every paragraph, and introducing many additional observations. On comparison with the preface as given in the fifth volume of the Wittemberg edition of Luther's works, Tindal appears to have added nearly one half to the original, which is entitled "Præfatio methodica totius scripturæ in epistola ad Romanos, e vernacula Martini Lutheri in Latinum versa, per Justum Jonam, 1523." The greater part of pages 318 and 319, with "the sum and whole cause of the writing of the epistle" at the conclusion, is neither in the original editions nor in the folio edition of Tindal's works, but is added from the second edition of his bible, printed in 1549.

† Thoroughly, to the bottom.

that thou should say the law here, in this place, were nothing but learning which teaches what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, as it goes with man's law, where the law is fulfilled with outward works only, though the heart be ever so far off. But God judgeth after the ground of the heart, yea and the thoughts and the secret movings of the mind; and therefore his law requires the ground of the heart, and love from the bottom thereof, and is not content with the outward work only, but rebukes those works most of all, which spring not of love, from the ground, and lowest bottom of the heart, though they appear outwardly ever so honest and good; as Christ in the gospel rebuked the pharisees above all others that were open sinners, and called them hypocrites, and painted sepulchres: than which pharisees yet lived no men so pure, as pertaining to the outward deeds, and works of the law; yea and Paul (Phil. iii.) confesses of himself that, as touching the law, he was such a one as no man could complain of; and notwithstanding he was yet a murderer of the christians, persecuted them, and tormented them so sorely that he compelled them to blaspheme Christ, and was altogether merciless, as many are who feign outward good works.

For this cause the 116th psalm calls all men liars, because that no man keeps the law from the ground of the heart, neither can keep it, though he appear outwardly full of good works. For all men are naturally inclined to evil and hate the law; we find in ourselves unwillingness, and tediousness to do good, but desire and delectation to do evil. Now where is no free desire to do good, there the bottom of the heart fulfils not the law, and there no doubt is also sin, and wrath is deserved before God, though there be ever so great an outward show and appearance of honest living. For this cause St. Paul concludes in the second chapter that the Jews all are sinners and transgressors of the law, though they make men believe, through hypocrisy of outward works, that they fulfil the law; and saith, that he only which doeth the law is righteous before God, meaning thereby that no man with outward works fulfilleth the law. "Thou," saith he to the Jew, "teachest that a man should not break wedlock, and yet breakest wedlock thyself. Wherein thou judgest another man, therein condemnest thou thyself, for thou thyself doest even the very same things which thou judgest." As though he would say, Thou livest outwardly well in the works of the law,

and judgest them that live not so; thou teachest other men, and seest a mote in another man's eye, but art not aware of the beam that is in thine own eye. For though thou keep the law outwardly with works, for fear of rebuke, shame, and punishment, or for love of reward, advantage, and vain glory; yet doest thou all without pleasure and love toward the law, and hadst rather a great deal do otherwise, if thou didst not fear the law, yea inwardly in thine heart; thou wouldest that there were no law, no nor yet God, the author and avenger of the law, if it were possible; so painful it is unto thee to have thine appetites refrained, and to be kept down.

Wherefore then it is a plain conclusion, that thou from the ground and bottom of thine heart art an enemy to the law. What prevails it now, that thou teachest another man not to steal, when thou thine ownself art a thief in thine heart, and outwardly wouldest fain steal if thou durst? Though that the outward deeds abide not alway behind with such hypocrites and dissemblers, but break forth, even as an evil scab cannot always be kept in with power of medicine. Thou teachest another man, but teachest not thyself; yea thou knowest not what thou teachest, for thou understandest not the law aright, how that it cannot be fulfilled and satisfied, but with an unfeigned love and affection; much less can it be fulfilled with outward deeds, and works only. Moreover, the law increases sin, as St. Paul saith, (chap. v.) because man is an enemy to the law, forasmuch as it requires so many things quite contrary to his nature, whereof he is not able to fulfil one point or tittle, as the law requires it. And therefore are we more provoked and have greater desire to break it.

For which cause sake he saith (chap. vii.) that the law is spiritual; as though he would say, If the law were fleshly, and only man's doctrine, it might be fulfilled, satisfied, and stilled with outward deeds. But now is the law spiritual, and no man fulfils it, except all that he does spring of love from the bottom of the heart. Such a new heart and lusty courage unto the law canst thou never come by of thine own strength and power, but by the operation and working of the Spirit. For the Spirit of God only makes a man spiritual and like unto the law, so that now henceforth he does nothing of fear, or for lucre or advantage sake, or of vain glory, but of a free heart and inward desire. The law is spiritual, and will be both loved and

fulfilled by a spiritual heart, and therefore of necessity it requires the Spirit, that makes a man's heart free, and gives him desire and courage toward the law. Where such a spirit is not, there remains sin, grudging, and hatred against the law, which law nevertheless is good, righteous, and holy.

Acquaint thyself therefore with the manner of speaking of the apostle, and let this now stick fast in thine heart, that it is not both one, to do the deeds and works of the law, and to fulfil the law. The work of the law, is whatsoever a man doeth, or can do of his own free-will, of his own proper strength and power. Notwithstanding though there be ever so great working, yet as long as there remains in the heart, unwillingness, tediousness, grudging, grief, pain, loathsomeness, and compulsion toward the law, so long are all the works unprofitable, lost, yea and damnable in the sight of God. This means Paul (chap. iii.) where he saith, "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in the sight of God." Hereby perceivest thou, that those sophisters are but deceivers, who teach that a man may and must prepare himself to grace and to the favour of God, with good works, before he has the Spirit, and true faith of Christ. How can they prepare themselves unto the favour of God and to that which is good, when they themselves can do no good, nor can once think a good thought or consent to do good, the devil possessing their hearts, minds, and thoughts captive at his pleasure? Can those works please God, thinkest thou, which are done with grief, pain, and tediousness, with an evil will, with a contrary and a grudging mind? O holy Prosperus, how mightily with the scripture of Paul didst thou confound this heresy, about a thousand years ago or thereupon.*

To fulfil the law is to do the works thereof, and whatsoever the law commands, with love, desire, inward affection, and delectation, and to live godly and well, freely, willingly, and without compulsion of the law, even as though there were no law at all. Such desire and free liberty to love the law, comes only by the working of the Spirit in the heart, as he saith in the first chapter.

Now is the Spirit no otherwise given, than by faith only, in that we believe the promises of God without wavering,

* Prosper was a layman of Aquitain who distinguished himself in the fifth century, by his defence of the doctrines of grace against the Pelagian writers who opposed Augustine. His writings evidence his piety, humility, and integrity. See the History of the Church of Christ. Cent. v. Ch. 13.

how that God is true, and will fulfil all his good promises towards us for Christ's blood's sake, as it is plain (chap. i.). I am not ashamed, saith Paul, of Christ's glad tidings, for it is the power of God unto salvation to as many as believe; for at once and together even as we believe the glad tidings preached to us, the Holy Ghost enters into our hearts, and looses the bonds of the devil, which before possessed our hearts in captivity, and held them that we could have no desire to the will of God in the law; and as the Spirit comes by faith only, even so faith comes by hearing the word, or glad tidings, of God, when Christ is preached that he is God's son and man also, dead and risen again for our sakes, as he saith in chap. iii. iv. x. All our justifying then cometh of faith, and faith and the Spirit come of God, and not of us. When we say, Faith bringeth the Spirit, i is not to be understood, that faith deserves the Spirit, or tha. the Spirit is not present in us before faith. For the Spirit is ever in us, and faith is the gift and working of the Spirit. But through preaching, the Spirit begins to work in us.

And as by preaching the law, he works the fear of God; so by preaching the glad tidings, he works faith. And now when we believe, and are come under the covenant of God, then are we sure of the Spirit by the promise of God, and then the Spirit accompanies faith inseparably, and we begin to feel his working. And so faith certifies us of the Spirit, and also brings the Spirit with her, unto the working of all other gifts of grace, and to the working out of the rest of our salvation, until we have altogether overcome sin, death, hell, and Satan, and are come unto the everlasting life of glory. And for this cause we say, Faith bringeth the Spirit.

Hereof comes it, that faith only justifies, makes righteous, and fulfils the law; for it brings the Spirit through Christ's deservings; the Spirit brings desire, looses the heart, makes him free, sets him at liberty, and gives him strength to work the deeds of the law with love, even as the law requires; then at the last, out of the same faith, so working in the heart, spring all good works by their own accord. That he means in the third chapter; for after he had cast away the works of the law, so that he speaks as though he would break, and disannul the law through faith, he answers to that which might be laid against him, saying, We destroy not the law through faith, but maintain, further, or establish the law through faith, that is to say, we fulfil the law through faith.

Sin is not called in the scripture that outward work only committed by the body, but all the whole business, and whatsoever accompanies, moves, or stirs unto the outward deed; and that whence the works spring, as unbelief, proneness, and readiness unto the deed in the ground of the heart, with all the powers, affections, and appetites, wherewith we can but sin; so that we say, that a man then sinneth, when he is carried away headlong into sin, altogether as much as he is, of that poisonous inclination and corrupt nature, wherein he was conceived and born. For there is none outward sin committed, except a man be carried away altogether, with life, soul, heart, body, lust, and mind thereunto. The scripture looks especially unto the heart, and unto the root and original fountain of all sin, which is unbelief in the bottom of the heart. For as faith only justifies and brings the Spirit, and desire unto the outward good works; even so unbelief only condemns and keeps out the Spirit, provokes the flesh, and stirs up lust unto the evil outward works, as it happened to Adam and Eve in Paradise. Gen. iii.

For this cause Christ calls sin, unbelief; and that remarkably in John xvi., "The Spirit shall rebuke the world of sin, because they believe not in me." And, (John viii.) "I am the light of the world." And therefore (John xii.) he bids them, "While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light, for he that walks in darkness knows not where he goeth." Now as Christ is the light, so is the ignorance of Christ that darkness whereof he speaks, in which he that walketh knows not whither he goeth; that is, he knows not how to work a good work in the sight of God, or what a good work is. And therefore Christ saith, "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world; but there cometh night when no man can work;" which night is but the ignorance of Christ, in which no man can see to do any work to please God. And Paul exhorts, (Eph. iv.) That they walk not as other heathens who are strangers from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them. And again in the same chapter: Put off the old man, which is corrupt through the lusts of error, that is to say, ignorance. And, (Rom. xiii.) Let us cast away the deeds of darkness, that is to say, of ignorance and unbelief. And, (1 Pet. i.) Fashion not yourselves unto your old lusts of ignorance. And, (1 John ii.) He that loveth his brother

dwelleth in light, and he that hateth his brother walketh in darkness, and wotteth not whither he goeth, for darkness hath blinded his eyes. By light he means the knowledge of Christ, and by darkness the ignorance of Christ. For it is impossible that he who knows Christ truly should hate his brother. Furthermore, to perceive this more clearly, thou shalt understand, that it is not possible to sin any sin at all, except a man break the first commandment before. Now the first commandment is divided into two verses: Thy Lord God is one God, and thou shalt love thy Lord God with all thine heart, with all thy soul, with all thy power, and with all thy might. And the whole cause why I sin against any inferior precept, is, that this love is not in mine heart; for were this law written in mine heart, and were it full and perfect in my soul, it would keep mine heart from consenting unto any sin. And the whole and only cause why this love is not written in our hearts, is that we believe not the first part, that "our Lord God is one God." For if I knew what these words, "one Lord and one God," mean, that is to say, if I understand that He made all and rules all, and that whatsoever is done to me, whether it be good or bad, is yet his will, and that he only is the Lord, that ruleth and doeth it: and if I also knew what this word, "mine," meaneth; that is to say, if mine heart believed and felt the infinite benefits and kindness of God toward me; and understood and earnestly believed the manifold covenants of mercy, wherewith God hath bound himself to be mine wholly and altogether, with all his power, love, mercy, and might; then should I love him with all mine heart, soul, power, and might, and of that love ever keep his commandments. So see ye now, that as faith is the mother of all goodness and of all good works; so is unbelief the ground and root of all evil, and all evil works. Finally, if a man that has forsaken sin, and is converted to put his trust in Christ, and to keep the law of God, do fall at any time, the cause is, that the flesh through negligence hath choked the spirit and oppressed her, and taken from her the food of her strength; which food is her meditation in God, and in his wonderful deeds, and in the manifold covenants of his mercy.

Wherefore then, before all good works, as good fruits, there must needs be faith in the heart whence they spring. And before all bad deeds, as bad fruits, there must needs be unbelief in the heart, as in the root, fountain, pith, and

strength of all sin; which unbelief and ignorance is called the head of the serpent, of the old dragon, which the woman's seed, Christ, must tread under foot as promised unto Adam.

GRACE and GIFT have this difference. Grace properly is God's favour, benevolence, or kind mind, which of his ownself, without our deserving, he bears to us, whereby he was moved and inclined to give Christ unto us, with all his other gifts of grace. Gift, is the Holy Ghost, and his working which he pours into the hearts of them, on whom he hath mercy, and whom he favours. Though the gifts and the Spirit increase in us daily, and have not yet their full perfection, yea and though there yet remain in us evil lusts and sin, which fight against the Spirit, as he saith here in chap. vii. and Gal. v., and as it was spoken before in Gen. iii. of the debate between the woman's seed and the seed of the serpent, yet nevertheless God's favour is so great and so strong over us for Christ's sake, that we are counted for fully whole, and perfect before God. For God's favour toward us, divides not herself, increasing a little and a little, as do the gifts; but receives us whole and altogether in full love, for Christ's sake, our Intercessor and Mediator, and because that the gifts of the Spirit, and the battle between the Spirit and evil lusts are begun in us already.

From this now understandest thou the seventh chapter, where Paul accuses himself as a sinner, and yet in the eighth chapter saith, There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ, and that because of the Spirit, and because the gifts of the Spirit are begun in us. Sinners we are, because the flesh is not fully killed and mortified. Nevertheless, inasmuch as we believe in Christ, and have the earnest and beginning of the Spirit, and would fain be perfect, God is so loving and favourable unto us, that he will not look on such sin, neither will he count it as sin; but will deal with us according to our belief in Christ, and according to his promises which he hath sworn to us, until the sin be fully slain and mortified by death.

FAITH is not man's opinion and dream, as some imagine and feign, when they hear the history of the gospel; but when they see that there follow no good works, nor amendment of living, though they hear, yea and can babble many things of faith, then they fall from the right way, and say, Faith ONLY justifies not, a man must have good works also, if he will be righteous and safe.

The cause is, when they hear the gospel or glad tidings, they feign of their own strength certain imaginations and thoughts in their hearts, saying: "I have heard the gospel, I remember the story, lo! I believe;" and that they count right faith, which nevertheless, as it is but man's imagination and feigning, even so it profits not, neither follow there any good works, or amendment of living.

But right faith is a thing wrought by the Holy Ghost in us, which changes us, turns us into a new nature, and begets us anew in God, and makes us the sons of God, as thou readest in the first of John; and kills the old Adam, and makes us altogether new in the heart, mind, will, desire, and in all other affections and powers of the soul; the Holy Ghost ever accompanying her and ruling the heart. Faith is a lively thing, mighty in working, valiant, and strong, ever doing, ever fruitful, so that it is impossible that he who is endued therewith should not work always good works without ceasing. He asks not whether good works are to be done or not, but has done them already, ere mention be made of them, and is always doing, for such is his nature; for quick faith in his heart and lively moving of the Spirit, drive and stir him thereunto. Whosoever doeth not good works, is an unbelieving person and faithless, and looks round about him, groping after faith and good works, and knows not what faith or good works mean, though he babble ever so many things of faith and good works.

Faith then is a lively and steadfast trust in the favour of God, wherewith we commit ourselves altogether unto God; and that trust is so surely grounded, and cleaves so fast to our hearts, that a man would not once doubt of it, though he should die a thousand times. And such trust, wrought by the Holy Ghost through faith, makes a man glad, strong, cheerful, and true hearted unto God and all creatures. Whereby, willingly and without compulsion, he is glad, and ready to do good to every man, to do service to every man, to suffer all things, that God may be loved and praised, who has given him such grace; so that it is impossible to separate good works from faith, even as it is impossible to separate heat and burning from fire. Therefore take heed to thyself, and beware of thine own fantasies and imaginations; which to judge of faith and good works will seem wise, when indeed they are stark blind, and of all things most foolish. Pray God that he will vouchsafe to work faith in

thine heart, or else shalt thou remain evermore faithless; feign thou, imagine thou, enforce thou, wrestle with thyself, and do what thou wilt or canst.

Righteousness is even such faith, and is called God's righteousness, or righteousness that is of value before God. For it is God's gift, and it alters a man, and changes him into a new spiritual nature, and makes him free and liberal to pay every man his duty. For through faith a man is purged of his sins, and obtaineth a desire unto the law of God; whereby he gives God his honour, and pays him that he owes him; and unto men he does service willingly, wherewithsoever he can, and pays every man his duty. Such righteousness, nature, free-will, and our own strength, never can bring to pass; for as no man can give himself faith, so he cannot take away unbelief, how then can he take away any sin at all? Wherefore all is false hypocrisy and sin, whatsoever is done without faith or in unbelief, as it is evident in the fourteenth of the Romans, though it appear ever so glorious or beautiful outwardly.

Flesh and Spirit thou mayest not here understand, as though flesh were only that which pertains unto unchastity, and the Spirit that which inwardly pertains unto the heart; but Paul calleth flesh here as Christ doth, John iii., all that is born of flesh; that is, the whole man, with life, soul, body, wit, will, reason, and whatsoever he is, or does within and without; because that these all, and all that is in man, desire after the world and the flesh. Call flesh therefore whatsoever we think or speak of God, of faith, of good works, and of spiritual matters, as long as we are without the Spirit of God. Call flesh also all works which are done without grace, and without the working of the Spirit, howsoever good, holy, and spiritual they seem to be; as thou mayest prove by Galatians v., where Paul numbers worshipping of idols, witchcraft, envy, and hate, among the deeds of the flesh; and by Romans viii., where he saith that the law, by the reason of the flesh, is weak; which is not understood of unchastity only, but of all sins, and most especially of unbelief, which is a vice most spiritual, and the ground of all sins.

And as thou callest him fleshly who is not renewed in the Spirit, and born again in Christ, and all his deeds, even the very motions of his heart and mind, his learning, doctrine, and contemplation of high things; his preaching, teaching, and study in the scriptures, building

of churches, founding of abbeys, giving of alms, mass, matins, and whatsoever he doeth, though it seem spiritual, and after the laws of God, is fleshly; so contrariwise call him spiritual who is renewed in Christ, and all his deeds which spring of faith, seem they ever so gross, as the washing of the disciples' feet done by Christ, and Peter's fishing after the resurrection; yea, and whatsoever is done within the laws of God, though it be wrought by the body, as the very wiping of shoes and such like, howsoever gross they appear outwardly. Without such understanding of these words, thou canst never understand this epistle of Paul, neither any other place in the holy scripture. Take heed, therefore, for whosoever understands these words otherwise, the same understands not Paul, whatsoever he be.

Now we will prepare ourselves unto the epistle.

Forasmuch as it becomes the preacher of Christ's glad tidings, first, through opening of the law, to rebuke all things, and to prove all things to be sin, that proceed not of the Spirit, and of faith in Christ; and to prove all men sinners, and children of wrath by inheritance; and how that to sin is their nature, and that by nature they can do no otherwise than sin; and therewith to abate the pride of man, and to bring him unto the knowledge of himself and of his misery and wretchedness, that he might desire help; even so doth St. Paul. And he begins in the first chapter to rebuke unbelief and gross sins, which all men see; as the idolatry, and as the gross sins of the heathen were, and as the sins now are, of all them who live in ignorance without faith, and without the favour of God, and saith, The wrath of the God of heaven appeareth through the gospel upon all men for their ungodly and unholy living. For though it be known and daily understood by the creatures, that there is but one God, yet is nature of herself, without the Spirit and grace, so corrupt and so poisoned, that men neither can thank him, neither worship him, neither give him his due honour; but they blind themselves, and fall without ceasing into worse case, even until they come unto worshipping of images, and working of shameful sins, which are abominable and against nature, and moreover they suffer the shame to be unrebuked in others, having delectation and pleasure therein.

In the second chapter the apostle proceeds further, and rebukes all those holy people also, who, without desire and love to the law, live well outwardly in the face of the world,

and condemn others gladly; as the nature of all hypocrites is, to think themselves pure in respect of open sinners, and yet they hate the law inwardly, and are full of covetousness and envy and all uncleanness. (Mat. xxiii.) These are they which despise the goodness of God, and according to the hardness of their hearts, heap together for themselves the wrath of God. Furthermore, St. Paul, as a true expounder of the law, suffers no man to be without sin, but declares that all they are under sin, who of free-will and of nature will live well; and he suffers them not to be better than the open sinners, yea he calls them hard-hearted and such as cannot repent.

In the third chapter he mingles both together, both the Jews and the Gentiles, and saith, that the one is as the other, both sinners, and no difference between them, save in this only, that the Jews had the word of God committed unto them. And though many of them believed not thereon, yet is God's truth and promise thereby neither hurt nor diminished; and he alleges the saying, psalm li., that God might abide true in his words, and overcome when he is judged. After that he returns to his purpose again, and proves by the scripture, that all men without difference of exception are sinners, and that by the works of the law no man is justified; but that the law was given to utter and to declare sin only. Then he begins and shows the right way unto righteousness, by what means men must be made righteous; and saith, they are all sinners and without praise before God, and must, without their own deserving, be made righteous through faith in Christ; who hath deserved such righteousness for us, and is become unto us God's mercy-seat, for the remission of sins that are past: thereby proving that Christ's righteousness, which comes upon us through faith, helps us only. Which righteousness, saith he, is now declared through the gospel, and was testified of before, by the law and the prophets. Furthermore, saith he, the law is holpen and furthered through faith, though the works thereof, with all their boast, are brought to nought, and are proved not to justify.

In the fourth chapter, after that by the three first chapters sins are opened, and the way of faith unto righteousness is laid, he begins to answer certain objections and cavillations. And first, he puts forth the blind reasons, which commonly they that will be justified by their own works are wont to make, when they hear that faith only,

without works, justifies; saying, Shall men do no good works? Yea and if faith only justifies, what need a man to study for to do good works? He puts forth therefore Abraham for an example, saying, What did Abraham with his works? Was all in vain? Came his works to no profit? And so he concludes that Abraham, without and before all works, was justified and made righteous. Insomuch that before the work of circumcision he was praised of the scripture, and called righteous by his faith only. (Gen. xv.) So that he did not the work of circumcision, for to be helped thereby unto righteousness, which yet God commanded him to do, and was a good work of obedience. So likewise, no doubt, no other works help any thing at all unto a man's justifying; but as Abraham's circumcision was an outward sign whereby he declared his righteousness which he had by faith, and his obedience and readiness unto the will of God; even so are all other good works outward signs and outward fruits of faith, and of the Spirit; which justify not a man, but show that a man is justified already before God, inwardly in the heart, through faith, and through the Spirit purchased by Christ's blood.

Herewith St. Paul now establishes his doctrine of faith, rehearsed chapter iii., and brings also the testimony of David, psalm xxxii., which calls a man blessed, not of works, in that his sin is not reckoned, and in that faith is imputed for righteousness, although he abide not afterward without good works, when he is once justified. For we are justified and receive the Spirit for to do good works, neither were it otherwise possible to do good works, except we first had the Spirit.

For how is it possible to do any thing well in the sight of God, while we are yet in captivity and bondage under the devil, and the devil possesses us altogether, and holds our hearts, so that we cannot once consent unto the will of God? No man therefore can prevent* the Spirit in doing good. The Spirit must first come and wake him out of his sleep with the thunder of the law, and fear him, and show him his miserable estate and wretchedness, and make him abhor and hate himself, and to desire help, and then comfort him again with the pleasant rain of the gospel, that is to say, with the sweet promises of God in Christ, and stir up faith in him to believe the promises. Then when he believeth the promises, as God was merciful

* Go before.

to promise, so is he true to fulfil them, and will give him the Spirit and strength, both to love the will of God, and to work thereafter. So we see that God only, who, according to the scripture, works all in all things, works a man's justifying, salvation, and health; yea and pours faith and belief, desire to love God's will, and strength to fulfil the same, into us, even as water is poured into a vessel; and that of his good will and purpose, and not of our deservings and merits. God's mercy in promising, and truth in fulfilling his promises, saveth us, and not we ourselves; and therefore is all laud, praise, and glory to be given unto God for his mercy and truth, and not unto us for our merits and deservings. After that, he stretches his example out against all other good works of the law, and concludes that the Jews cannot be Abraham's heirs, because of blood and kindred only, and much less by the works of the law, but must inherit Abraham's faith, if they will be the right heirs of Abraham; forasmuch as Abraham before the law, both of Moses and also of the circumcision, was through faith made righteous, and called the father of all them that believe, and not of them that work. Moreover, the law causes wrath, inasmuch as no man can fulfil it with love and desire; and as long as such grudging, hate, and indignation against the law remains in the heart, and is not taken away by the Spirit that comes by faith, so long, no doubt, the works of the law declare evidently that the wrath of God is upon us and not favour; wherefore faith only receives the grace promised unto Abraham. And these examples were not written for Abraham's sake only, saith he, but for ours also, to whom, if we believe, faith shall be reckoned likewise for righteousness.

In the fifth chapter the apostle commends the fruits and works of faith; as are peace, rejoicing in the conscience, inward love to God and man; moreover boldness, trust, confidence, and a strong and earnest mind, and steadfast hope in tribulation and suffering. For all such follow, where the right faith is, for the abundant grace's sake, and gifts of the Spirit, which God hath given us in Christ, in that he gave to him to die for us while yet his enemies.

Now have we then, that faith only, before all works, justifies, and that it follows not yet therefore, that a man should do no good works, but that the right shapen works abide not behind, but accompany faith, even as brightness doth the sun; and they are called by Paul the fruits of the

Spirit. Where the Spirit is, there it is always summer, and there are always good fruits, that is to say, good works. This is Paul's order, That good works spring of the Spirit; the Spirit cometh by faith, and faith cometh by hearing the word of God, when the glad tidings and promises, which God hath made unto us in Christ, are preached truly, and received in the ground of the heart, without wavering or doubting; after that the law hath passed upon us, and hath condemned our consciences. Where the word of God is preached purely, and received in the heart, there is faith, the Spirit of God, and there are also good works of necessity, whensoever occasion is given. Where God's word is not purely preached, but men's dreams, traditions, imaginations, inventions, ceremonies, and superstition, there is no faith, and consequently no Spirit that cometh from God; and where God's Spirit is not, there can be no good works, (even as where an apple-tree is not, there can grow no apples,) but there is unbelief, the devil's spirit, and evil works. Of this, God's Spirit and his fruits, our holy hypocrites have not once known, neither yet tasted how sweet they are, though they feign many good works of their own imagination, to be justified withal; in which is not one crumb of true faith, or spiritual love, or of inward joy, peace, and quietness of conscience; forasmuch as they have not the word of God for them, that such works please God, but they are the rotten fruits of a rotten tree.

After that he breaks forth and goes on at large, and shows whence both sin and righteousness, death and life come. And he compares Adam and Christ together; thus reasoning and disputing, that Christ must needs come as a second Adam, to make us heirs of his righteousness, through a new spiritual birth, without our deservings. Even as the first Adam made us heirs of sin, through the bodily generation, without our deserving: whereby it is evidently known and proved to the uttermost, that no man can bring himself out of sin unto righteousness, any more than he could have withstood that he was born bodily. And that is proved herewith—forasmuch as the very law of God, which of right should have helped, if any thing could have holpen, not only came and brought no help with it, but also increased sin; because that the evil and poisoned nature is offended, and utterly displeased with the law, and the more she is forbid by the law, the more is she provoked and set on fire to fulfil and satisfy her lusts.

By the law then we see clearly, that we must needs have Christ to justify us with his grace, and to help nature.

In the sixth, he sets forth the chief and principal work of faith; the battle of the Spirit against the flesh, how the Spirit labours and enforces to kill the remnant of sin and lust which remain in the flesh, after our justifying. And this chapter teaches us, that we are not so free from sin through faith, that we should henceforth go up and down, idle, careless, and sure of ourselves, as though there were now no more sin in us. Yet there is sin remaining in us, but it is not reckoned, because of faith and of the Spirit, which fight against it—wherefore we have enough to do all our lives long, to tame our bodies, and to compel the members to obey the Spirit and not the appetites; that thereby we might be like unto Christ's death and resurrection, and might fulfil our baptism, which signifies the mortifying of sins, and the new life of grace. For this battle ceases not in us until the last breath, and until that sin be utterly slain by the death of the body.

This thing, I mean to tame the body and so forth, we are able to do, saith he, Seeing we are under grace, and not under the law. What it is not to be under the law he himself expoundeth. For not to be under the law, is not so to be understood, that every man may do what pleases him. But not to be under the law, is to have a free heart renewed with the Spirit, so that thou hast a desire inwardly, of thine own accord, to do that which the law commands, without compulsion, yea, though there were no law. For grace, that is to say, God's favour, brings us the Spirit, and makes us love the law; so is there now no more sin, neither is the law now any more against us, but at one, and agreed with us, and we with it. But to be under the law, is to deal with the works of the law, and to work without the Spirit and grace; for so long, no doubt, sin reigns in us through the law; that is to say, the law declares that we are under sin, and that sin hath power and dominion over us, seeing we cannot fulfil the law, namely, within in the heart, forasmuch as no man naturally favours the law, consents thereunto, and delights therein, which is exceeding great sin, that we cannot consent to the law; which law is nothing save the will of God.

This is the right freedom and liberty from sin, and from the law; whereof he writes unto the end of this chapter, that it is a freedom to do good only willingly, and to live

well without compulsion of the law. Wherefore this freedom is a spiritual freedom, which destroys not the law, but ministers that which the law requires, and wherewith the law is fulfilled; that is, to understand, desire, and love, wherewith the law is stilled, and accuses us no more, compels us no more, neither hath aught to crave of us any more. Even as though thou wert in debt to another man, and wert not able to pay, two manner of ways mightest thou be loosed; one way, if he would require nothing of thee, and break thine obligation; another way, if some other good man would pay for thee, and give thee as much as thou mightest satisfy thine obligation with. Thus hath Christ made thee free from the law, and therefore is this no wild fleshly liberty, that should do nought, but that doeth all things, and is free from the craving and debt of the law.

In the seventh chapter he confirms the same, with a similitude of the state of matrimony. As when the husband dies, the wife is at liberty, and the one is loosed and departed from the other: not that the woman should not have the power to marry unto another man; but rather now first of all is she free, and hath power to marry unto another man, which she could not do till she was loosed from her first husband. Even so are our consciences bound, and in danger to the law under old Adam, the flesh, as long as he liveth in us, for the law declares that our hearts are bound, and that we cannot disconsent from him; but when he is mortified and killed by the Spirit, then is the conscience free and at liberty; not so that the conscience shall now do nought, but now first of all cleaves unto another, that is, Christ, and brings forth the fruits of life. So now to be under the law, is not to be able to fulfil the law, but to be debtor to it, and not able to pay that which the law requires. And to be loosed from the law, is to fulfil it, and to pay that which the law demands, so that it can now henceforth ask thee nought.

Consequently Paul declares more largely the nature of sin, and of the law; how that through the law, sin revives, moves herself, and gathers strength. For the old man and corrupt nature, the more he is forbidden and kept under the law, is the more offended and displeased therewith, forasmuch as he cannot pay that which is required of the law. For sin is his nature, and of himself he cannot but sin. Therefore is the law death to him, torment, and martyrdom. Not that the law is evil, but because

that the evil nature cannot suffer that which is good, and cannot abide that the law should require of him any good thing. As a sick man cannot suffer that any should desire him to run, to leap, and to do other deeds of a whole man.

For which cause St. Paul concludes, that where the law is understood and perceived, even in the best, there it does no more than utter sin, and bring us to the knowledge of ourselves; and thereby kill us, and make us bound unto eternal damnation, and debtors to the everlasting wrath of God; even as he well feels and understands, whose conscience is truly touched by the law. In such danger were we ere the law came, that we knew not what sin meant, neither yet knew we the wrath of God upon sinners, till the law had uttered it. So seest thou that a man must have some other thing, yea and a greater and a more mighty thing than the law, to make him righteous and safe. They that understand not the law on this wise, are blind, and go to work presumptuously, supposing to satisfy the law with works. For they know not that the law requires a free, a willing, a strong, and a loving heart. Therefore they see not Moses right in the face; the vail hangs between, and hides his face, so that they cannot behold the glory of his countenance, how that the law is spiritual, and requires the heart. I may of mine own strength refrain so that I do mine enemy no hurt; but to love him with all mine heart, and to put away wrath wholly out of my mind, I cannot of mine own strength. I may refuse money of mine own strength, but to put away love unto riches out of mine heart, can I not do of mine own strength. To abstain from adultery, as concerning the outward deed, I can do of mine own strength; but not to desire in mine heart, is as impossible to me, as is to choose whether I will hunger or thirst, and yet so the law requires: wherefore of a man's own strength the law is never fulfilled; we must have thereunto God's favour and his Spirit, purchased by Christ's blood. Nevertheless when I say a man may do many things outwardly against his heart, we must understand that man is but driven of divers appetites, and the greatest appetite overcomes the less and carries the man away violently with it.

As when I desire vengeance, and fear also the inconvenience that is likely to follow, if fear be greater, I abstain; if the appetite that desires vengeance be greater, I cannot but prosecute the deed, as we see by experience in many

murderers and thieves; who though they are brought into ever so great peril of death, yet after they have escaped, do even the same again: and common women prosecute their evil course because fear and shame are away, when others who have the same appetites in their hearts, abstain at the least outwardly, or work secretly, being overcome of fear and of shame; and so likewise is it of all other appetites.

Furthermore, the apostle declares, how the Spirit and the flesh fight together in one man; and he makes an example of himself, that we may learn to know that work aright, I mean to kill sin in ourselves. He calleth both the Spirit and also the flesh, a law; because that like as the nature of God's law, is to drive, to compel, and to crave, even so the flesh drives, compels, craves, and rages against the Spirit, and will have its lusts satisfied. On the other side, the Spirit driveth, crieth, and fighteth against the flesh, and will have his desire satisfied. And this strife endures in us as long as we live, in some more and in some less, as the Spirit or the flesh is stronger; and the man his own self is both the Spirit and the flesh, who fights with his own self, until sin be utterly slain, and he altogether spiritual.

In the eighth chapter he comforts such fighters, that they despair not because of such flesh, neither think that they are less in favour with God. And he shows how that the sin remaining in us hurts not, For there is no danger to them, that are in Christ, which walk not after the flesh, but fight against it. And he expounds more largely what is the nature of the flesh, and of the Spirit; and how the Spirit cometh by Christ, which Spirit makes us spiritual, tames, subdues, and mortifies the flesh; and certifies us that we are nevertheless the sons of God and also beloved, though sin rage ever so much in us, so long as we follow the Spirit, and fight against sin to kill and mortify it. And because nothing is so good to the mortifying of the flesh, as the cross and tribulation, which are nothing pleasant, he comforts us in our passions and afflictions by the assistance of the Spirit, which maketh intercession to God for us mightily, with groanings that pass man's utterance; man's speech cannot comprehend them, and the creatures mourn also with us of great desire that they have, that we were loosed from sin, and the corruption of the flesh. So we see that those three chapters do nothing so much as to drive us unto the right work of faith, which is to kill the old man and mortify the flesh.

In the ninth, tenth, and eleventh chapters, he treats of

God's predestination; whence it springs altogether; whether we shall believe or not believe; be loosed from sin, or not be loosed. By which predestination, our justifying and salvation are wholly taken out of our hands, and put in the hands of God only, which is most necessary of all. For we are so weak and so uncertain, that if it stood in us, there would of a truth be no man saved, the devil no doubt would deceive us. But now is God sure, that his predestination cannot deceive him, neither can any man withstand or hinder him, and therefore have we hope and trust against sin.

But here must a mark be set to those unquiet, busy, and high climbing spirits, how far they shall go; who first of all bring hither their high reasons and ready wits, and begin first from on high to search the bottomless secrets of God's predestination, whether they be predestinate or not. These must needs either cast themselves down headlong into desperation, or else commit themselves to free chance, careless. But follow thou the order of this epistle, and noosel thyself* with Christ, and learn to understand what the law and the gospel mean, and the office of both the two; that thou mayest in the one know thyself, and how that thou hast of thyself no strength but to sin, and in the other the grace of Christ; and then see thou fight against sin and the flesh, as the seven first chapters teach thee. After that, when thou art come to the eighth chapter, and art under the cross and suffering of tribulation, then the necessity of predestination will wax sweet, and thou shalt well feel how precious a thing it is. For except thou hadst borne the cross of adversity and temptation, and hast felt thyself brought unto the very brim of desperation, yea and unto hell gates, thou canst never meddle with the sentence of predestination without thine own harm, and without secret wrath and grudging inwardly against God: for otherwise it shall not be possible for thee to think that God is righteous and just. Therefore must Adam be well mortified, and the fleshly wit brought utterly to nought, ere thou mayest away with this thing, and drink such strong wine. Take heed therefore unto thyself, that thou drink not wine, while thou art yet but a suckling. For every learning hath its time, measure, and age, and in Christ is there a certain childhood, in which a man must be content with milk for a season, until he wax strong and grow up unto a perfect man in Christ, and be able to eat of stronger meat.

* Find shelter, as a child with a nurse.

In the twelfth chapter, he giveth exhortations. For this manner Paul observes in all his epistles; first, he teaches Christ and the faith, then he exhorts to good works, and unto continual mortifying of the flesh. So here he teaches good works in deed, and the true serving of God, and makes all men priests, to offer up, not money and beasts, as the manner was in the time of the law, but their own bodies, with killing and mortifying the lusts of the flesh. After that, he describes the outward conversation of christian men, how they ought to behave themselves in spiritual things, how to teach, preach, and rule in the congregation of Christ, to serve one another, to suffer all things patiently, and to commit wrath and vengeance to God. In conclusion, how a christian man ought to behave himself unto all men, to friend, foe, or whatsoever he be. These are the right works of a christian man which spring out of faith; for faith keepeth not holiday, neither suffers any man to be idle, wheresoever she dwells.

In the thirteenth chapter, he teaches to honour the worldly and temporal sword. For though man's law and ordinance make not a man good before God, neither justify him in the heart, yet are they ordained for the furtherance of the commonwealth, to maintain peace, to punish the evil, and to defend the good. Therefore ought the good to honour the temporal sword, and to have it in reverence, though as concerning themselves they need it not, but would abstain from evil of their own accord; yea, and do good without man's law, but by the law of the Spirit, which governs the heart, and guides it unto all that is the will of God. Finally, he comprehends and knits up all in love. Love of her own nature bestows all that she hath, and even her own self on that which is loved. Thou needest not bid a kind mother to be loving unto her only son, much less does spiritual love, which hath eyes given her of God, need man's law to teach her to do her duty. And as in the beginning, the apostle put forth Christ as the cause and author of our righteousness and salvation, even so he sets him forth here as an example to imitate, that as he has done to us, even so should we do one to another.

In the fourteenth chapter he teaches to deal soberly with the consciences of the weak in the faith, who yet understand not the liberty of Christ perfectly enough; and to favour them of christian love, and not to use the liberty of the faith unto hinderance, but unto the furtherance and edifying of the weak. For where such consideration is not,

there follows debate and despising of the gospel. It is better then to forbear the weak awhile, until they wax strong, than that the learning should come altogether under foot. And such work is a singular work of love, yea and where love is perfect there must needs be such a respect unto the weak; a thing that Christ commanded and charged to be had above all things.

In the fifteenth chapter he sets forth Christ again to be imitated; that we also by his example should bear with others that are yet weak; as them that are frail open sinners, unlearned, unexpert, and of loathsome manners, and not cast them away forthwith, but suffer them till they wax better, and exhort them in the mean time. For so dealt Christ in the gospel and now deals with us daily, suffering our imperfectness, weakness, conversation, and manners not yet fashioned after the doctrine of the gospel, but which smell of the flesh, yea and sometimes break forth into outward deeds. After that, to conclude, he wishes them increase of faith, peace, and joy of conscience, praises then and commits them to God, and magnifies his office and administration in the gospel; and soberly and with great discretion desires succour and aid of them for the poor saints of Jerusalem; and it is all pure love that he speaks or deals with.

So find we in this epistle plenteously, unto the uttermost, whatsoever a christian man or woman ought to know. That is, what the law, the gospel, sin, grace, faith, righteousness, Christ, God, good works, love, hope, and the cross are; and even wherein the pith of all that pertains to the christian faith standeth; and how a christian man ought to behave himself unto every man, be he perfect or a sinner, good or bad, strong or weak, friend or foe; and in conclusion, how to behave ourselves both toward God and toward ourselves also. And all things are profoundly grounded in the scriptures, and declared with examples of himself, of the fathers, and of the prophets, that a man can here desire no more. Wherefore it appears evidently, that Paul's mind was to comprehend briefly in his epistle all the whole learning of Christ's gospel, and to prepare an introduction unto all the old testament. For without doubt, whosoever has this epistle perfectly in his heart, the same hath the light and the effect of the old testament with him. Wherefore let every man, without exception, exercise himself therein diligently, and record it night and day continually, until he be fully acquainted therewith.

The last chapter is a chapter of recommendation, wherein

he yet mingles a good admonition, that we should beware of the traditions and doctrine of men, which beguile the simple with sophistry and learning that is not after the gospel, and draw them from Christ, and noosel them in weak and feeble, and as Paul calls them in the epistle to the Galatians, in beggarly ceremonies; for the intent that they would live in fat pastures and be in authority and be taken as Christ, yea and above Christ, and sit in the temple of God; that is, in the consciences of men, where God only, his Word and his Christ ought to sit. Compare therefore all manner of doctrine of men with the scripture, and see whether they agree or not. And commit thyself wholly and altogether unto Christ, and so shall he with his Holy Spirit, and with all his fulness, dwell in thy soul.

The sum and whole cause of the writing of this epistle, is to prove that a man is justified by faith only; which proposition whoso denies, to him is not only this epistle and all that Paul writes, but also the whole scripture so locked up, that he shall never understand it to his soul's health. And to bring a man to the understanding and feeling that faith only justifies, Paul proves that the whole nature of man is so poisoned and so corrupt, yea and so dead, concerning godly living or godly thinking, that it is impossible for it to keep the law in the sight of God: that is to say, to love it, and of love and willingness to do it as naturally as a man eats or drinks, until he be quickened again and healed through faith. And by justifying, understand no other thing than to be reconciled to God, and to be restored unto his favour, and to have thy sins forgiven thee. As when I say, God justifieth us, understand thereby, that God for Christ's sake, merits, and deservings only, receives us unto his mercy, favour, and grace, and forgives us our sins. And when I say, Christ justifieth us, understand thereby, that Christ only hath redeemed us, brought, and delivered us out of the wrath of God and damnation, and hath with his words only purchased us the mercy, the favour, and grace of God, and the forgiveness of our sins. And when I say, that faith justifieth, understand, that faith and trust in the truth of God and in the mercy promised us for Christ's sake, and for his deserving and works only, doth quiet the conscience and certify it that our sins be forgiven, and we in the full favour of God.

Furthermore, set before thine eyes Christ's works and thine own works. Christ's works only justify thee, and make satisfaction for thy sin, and not thine own works:

that is to say, quiet thy conscience, and make thee sure that thy sins are forgiven thee, and not thine own works. For the promise of mercy is made thee for Christ's work's sake, and not for thine own work's sake.

Wherefore, seeing God hath not promised that thine own works shall save thee, therefore faith in thine own works can never quiet thy conscience, nor certify thee before God, when God comes to judge and to take a reckoning, that thy sins are forgiven thee. Beyond all this, mine own works can never satisfy the law, or pay that I owe it, for I owe the law to love it with all mine heart,soul, power, and might. Which to pay I am never able, while compassed with flesh. No, I cannot once begin to love the law, except I be first sure by faith, that God loves me and forgives me.

Finally, that we say, Faith only justifieth, ought to offend no man. For if this be true, that Christ only redeemed us, Christ only bare our sins, made satisfaction for them, and purchased us the favour of God, then must it needs be true that the trust only in Christ's deserving and in the promises of God the Father, made to us for Christ's sake, alone quiets the conscience, and certifies it that the sins are forgiven. And when they say, A man must repent, forsake sin, and have a purpose to sin no more, as nigh as he can, and love the law of God; therefore, faith alone justifies not. I answer, That, and all like arguments are nought, and like to this—I must repent and be sorry, the gospel must be preached me, and I must believe, or else I cannot be partaker of mercy, which Christ hath deserved for me. Therefore Christ only justifieth me not, or Christ only hath not made satisfaction for my sins—as this is a naughty argument so is the other.

Now go to, reader, and according to the order of Paul's writing, even so do thou. First, behold thyself diligently in the law of God, and see there thy just damnation. Secondly, turn thine eyes to Christ, and see there the exceeding mercy of thy most kind and loving Father. Thirdly, remember that Christ made not this atonement that thou shouldest anger God again; neither died he for thy sins, that thou shouldest live still in them; neither cleansed he thee, that thou shouldest return, as a swine, unto thine old puddle again; but that thou shouldest be a new creature, and live a new life after the will of God, and not of the flesh. And be diligent, lest through thine own negligence and unthankfulness, thou lose this favour and mercy again. Farewell.

THE

TESTAMENT OF WILLIAM TRACY, ESQUIRE,

EXPOUNDED

BY WILLIAM TINDAL;

WHEREIN THOU SHALT PERCEIVE WITH WHAT CHARITY THE CHANCELLOR OF WORCESTER BURNED, WHEN HE TOOK UP THE DEAD CARCASE, AND MADE ASHES OF IT, AFTER IT WAS BURIED.

To the Reader.

THOU shalt understand, most dear reader, that after William Tindal was so Judasly betrayed by an Englishman, a scholar of Louvain, whose name was Philips, there were certain things of his doing found, which he had intended to have put forth to the furtherance of God's word; among which was this testament of M. Tracy, expounded by himself; whereunto was annexed the exposition of the same, of John Frith's doing and own hand-writing, which I have caused to be put in print, to the intent that all the world should see how earnestly the canonists and spiritual lawyers, who are the chief rulers, under bishops, in every diocese, insomuch that in every cathedral church, the dean, chancellor, and archdeacon are commonly doctors or batchelors of law, do endeavour themselves justly to judge, and spiritually to give sentence, according to charity, upon all the acts and deeds done by their diocesans. According to the example of the chancellor of Worcester, who, after M. Tracy was buried, out of pure zeal and love, took up the dead carcase and burned it; wherefore he did it, shall evidently appear to the reader in this little treatise. Read it therefore, I beseech thee, and judge the spirits of our spiritualty, and pray that the Spirit of Him that raised up Christ, may once inhabit them and mollify their hearts, and so illumine them, that they may both see and show true light, and no longer resist God or his truth. Amen.*

* Strype (Annals I. p. 507) says, "William Tracy, Esq. of Todington, in Gloucestershire, remarkable for the popish severity used towards his dead corpse; which was digged up out of its grave, anno 1532, and burnt to ashes, by order of Thomas Parker, chancellor of Worcester. Being dead and buried, he was judicially tried and proceeded against in the convocation, and declared a heretic because of some passages in his last will and testament, wherein he showed little regard of having his soul prayed for after his decease; and therefore left nothing to any priest to do that office for him. But the said Parker, out of his popish zeal, going beyond his order in burning the body, when the sentence went no further than the digging it out of the grave, and removing it from christian

THE TESTAMENT ITSELF.

In the name of God. Amen. I, William Tracy, of Todington, in the county of Gloucester, esquire, make my testament and last will, as hereafter followeth.

First, and before all other things, I commit me unto God, and to his mercy, trusting without any doubt or mistrust, that by his grace and the merits of Jesus Christ, and by the virtue of his passion and of his resurrection, I have, and shall have, remission of my sins, and resurrection of body and soul, according as it is written, Job xix.—I believe that my Redeemer liveth, and that at the last day I shall rise out of the earth, and in my flesh shall see my Saviour; this my hope is laid by in my bosom.

And as touching the wealth* of my soul, the faith that I have taken and rehearsed is sufficient, as I suppose, without any other man's work or works. My ground and my belief is, that there is but one God, and one Mediator between God and man, which is Jesus Christ. So that I do accept none in heaven nor in earth, to be my Mediator between me and God, but only Jesus Christ; all others are but petitioners for receiving of grace, but none are able to give influence of grace. And therefore will I bestow no part of my goods for the intent that any man should say, or do, to help my soul. For therein I trust only to the promise of God, He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; and he that believeth not, shall be damned.

And, touching the burying of my body, it availeth me not what be done thereto; wherein St. Augustine, concerning taking care for the dead, saith, that they are rather the solace of them that live, than the wealth or comfort of them that are departed, and therefore I remit it only to the discretion of mine executors.

And, touching the distribution of my temporal goods, my purpose is, by the grace of God, to bestow them to be

burial, the relations took their opportunity afterwards, when things looked more favourably upon religion, and got him fined in a great sum." Parker had neglected to apply for a writ authorizing him to burn the dead corpse.

Many copies of Tracy's testament were circulated, and wherever one was found in the possession of any person, it was considered a proof of heresy. Fox mentions that when Thomas Philips was imprisoned as a heretic, the only charges which could be substantiated against him were his having a copy of Tracy's testament, and butter and cheese being found in his chamber during Lent!

* Welfare, salvation.

accepted as fruits of faith, so that I do not suppose that my merit be by good bestowing of them, but my merit is the faith of Jesus Christ only, by which faith, such works are good, according to the words of our Lord, Matt. xxv.—I was hungry, and thou gavest me to eat; and it followeth, That which ye have done to the least of my brethren, ye have done to me, &c. And we should ever consider the true sentence, that a good work maketh not a good man, but a good man maketh a good work; for faith maketh the man both good and righteous; for a righteous man liveth by faith, (Rom. i.) and whatsoever springeth not out of faith, is sin. Rom. xiv.

And all my temporal goods that I have not given or delivered, or not given by writing, of mine own hand, bearing the date of this present writing, I do leave and give to Margaret my wife, and to Richard my son, whom I make mine executors. Witness this mine own hand, the x day of October, in the xxii year of the reign of king Henry the eighth, (A. D. 1530.)

TINDAL.

Now let us examine the parts of this testament, sentence by sentence. First, To commit ourselves to God above all, is the first of all precepts; and the first stone in the foundation of our faith, that we believe and put our trust in one God; one all true, one all mighty, all good, and all merciful; cleaving fast to his truth, might, mercy, and goodness, surely certified and fully persuaded that he is our God, yea ours, and to us all true, without all falsehood and guile, and that cannot fail in his promises; and to us all mighty, that his will cannot be hindered to fulfil all the truth that he hath promised us; and to us all good and all merciful, whatsoever we have done, and howsoever grievously we have trespassed, so that we come to him the way that he hath appointed, which way is Jesus Christ only, as we shall see to follow. This first clause then is the first commandment, or at the least, the first sentence in the first commandment, and the first article of our creed.

And that this trust and confidence in the mercy of God is through Jesus Christ, is the second article of our creed, confirmed and testified throughout all scripture. That Christ brings us into this grace, Paul proves, (Romans v.) saying, Being justified by faith, we are at peace with God,

through Jesus Christ our Lord, by whom we have an entering in unto this grace in which we stand. And Eph. iii. By whom, saith Paul, we have a bold entering in, through the faith that is in him. And in the second of the said epistle, By him we have an entering in unto the Father; and a little before in the same chapter, He is our peace. And John, in the first chapter, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world; which sin was the bush that stopped the entering in and kept us out, and the sword wherewith was kept the entering unto the tree of life from Adam and all his offspring. And in the second of the First of Peter, Who bare our sins in his own body, and by whose stripes we are made whole. By whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of our sins. (Col. i. Eph. i. and Rom. iv.) He was delivered for our sins, and rose again for our justifying.

And concerning the resurrection, it is an article of our faith, and proved there sufficiently; and that it shall be by the power of Christ, is also the open scripture. (John vi.) This is the will of my Father which sent me, that I lose nothing of all that he hath given me, but that I raise it up again in the last day. And again, I am the resurrection. John xi.

That this lively faith is sufficient to justification, without adding to of any more help, is thus proved. The promiser is God, of whom Paul saith, (Rom. viii.) If God be on our side, what matter maketh it who is against us? He is thereto all good, all merciful, all true, and all mighty, wherefore sufficient to be believed by his oath. Moreover, Christ, in whom the promise is made, hath received all power in heaven and earth. (Matt. xxviii.) He hath also a perpetual priesthood, and therefore is able perpetually to save. Heb. vii.

And that there is but one Mediator, Christ, as Paul saith, I Tim. ii. And by that word understand an atonement-maker, a peace-maker, and bringer into grace and favour, having full power so to do. And that Christ is so, is proved at the full. It is written, (John iii.) The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all into his hand. And he that believeth the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth upon him. All things are given me of my Father. (Luke x.) And all whosoever call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. (Acts ii.) Of his fulness have we all received. (John i.) There is no other name given

to man, in which we must be saved. (Acts iv.) And again, Unto his name bear all the prophets record, that by his name shall all that believe in him receive remission. (Acts x.) In him dwelleth all the fulness of God bodily. (Col. ii.) All whatsoever my Father hath, are mine. (John xvi.) Whatsoever ye ask in my name, that will I do for you. (John xiv.) One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, and Father of all, which is above all, through all, and in you all. (Eph. iv.) There is but one, whose servant I am, to do his will; but one that shall pay me my wages; there is but one to whom I am bound, therefore, but one that hath power over me, to condemn or save me. I will add to this, Paul's argument, (Gal. iii.) God sware unto Abraham, four hundred years before the law was given, that we should be saved by Christ; therefore, the law given four hundred years after, cannot disannul that covenant. I argue thus, Christ, when he had suffered his passion, and was risen again and entered into his glory, was sufficient for his apostles, without any other mean or help; therefore, the holiness of no saint since, hath diminished aught of that his power; but he is as full sufficient now, for the promise is as deeply made to us as to them. Moreover, the treasure of his mercy was laid up in Christ for all that should believe, ere the world was made; therefore, nothing that hath happened since hath changed the purpose of the unvariable God.

Moreover, to exclude the blind imagination, falsely called faith, of those who give themselves to vice without resistance, affirming that they have no power to do otherwise, but that God hath so made them, and therefore must save them, they not intending or purposing to mend their living, but sinning with whole consent and full lust, he declares what faith he meaneth, two manner of ways. First, by that he saith, Whosoever believeth and is baptised, shall be saved. By which words he declares evidently he means that faith, which is in the promise made upon the appointment between God and us, that we should keep his law to the uttermost of our power; which is, he that believeth in Christ for the remission of sin, and is baptised to do the will of Christ, and to keep his law of love, and to mortify the flesh, that man shall be saved. And so the imagination of these swine who will not leave wallowing themselves in every mire and puddle, is wholly excluded; for God never made promise but upon an appointment or

covenant, under which whosoever will not come, can be no partaker of the promise. True faith in Christ giveth power to love the law of God; for it is written, (John i.) He gave them power to be the sons of God, in that they believe in his name. Now to be the son of God is to love righteousness, and hate unrighteousness, and so to be like thy Father. Hast thou then no power to love the law? So hast thou no faith in Christ's blood. And (Rom. iii.) We set up or maintain the law through faith. Why so? For the preaching of faith ministereth the Spirit. (Gal. iii. 2 Cor. iii.) And the Spirit looseth the bands of Satan, and gives power to love the law, and also to do it. For saith Paul, (Rom. viii.) If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus dwells in you, then will He that raised up Jesus, quicken your mortal bodies by the means of his Spirit dwelling in you.

Ah well, wilt thou say, If I must profess the law and work, then faith alone saveth me not. Be not deceived with sophistry, but withdraw thine ears from words, and consider what is in thine heart. Faith justifieth thee, that is, it brings remission of all sins, and sets thee in the state of grace, before all works, and gets thee power to work, ere thou couldest work; but if thou wilt not go back again, but continue in grace, and come to that salvation and glorious resurrection of Christ, thou must work, and join works to thy faith, in will and deed also, if thou have time and leisure; and as oft as thou fallest, set thee on thy faith again, without help of works. And although when thou art reconciled and restored to grace, works be required, yet is not that reconciling and grace the benefit of the works that follow; but clean contrary, that forgiveness of thy sins, and restoring to favour deserve the works that follow. Though when a king, after sentence of death is passed upon a murderer, hath pardoned him at the request of some of his friends, works are required of him, that he henceforth keep the king's laws, if he will continue in his grace's favour in which he now standeth; yet the benefit of his life proceeds not of the deserving of the works that follow, but of the king's goodness and favour of his friends, yea, and that benefit and gift of his life, deserve the works that follow. Though the father chastise the child, yet the child is no less bound to obey, and to do the will of the father. If when the father pardons it, the works that follow deserve that favour, then must the works that followed the

correction have deserved favour also; and then was the father unrighteous to chastise it. All, whatsoever thou art able to please God with, it is thy duty to do, though thou hadst never sinned: if it be thy duty, how can it then be the deserving of the mercy and grace that went before? Now that mercy was the benefit of God thy Father, through the deserving of the Lord Christ, which hath bought thee with the price of his blood.

And again, when he saith that he purposes to bestow his goods to be accepted as fruits of faith, it is evident he means that living faith which professes the law of God, and is the mother of all good works, yea, and nurse thereto.

Another cavillation which they might make in the second part, where he admits no other Mediator but Christ only, nor will give of his goods to bind any man to any feigned observance for the help of his soul, when he were whole in the kingdom of Christ, delivered, both body and soul from the dominion of Satan, as the scripture testifies all that die in Christ to be, is this—They will say that he held that none should pray for him save Christ, and that we be not bound to pray one for another, nor ought to desire the prayers of another man—but this he excludes, in that he saith, All others are but petitioners. By which words he plainly confesses that others may and ought to pray, and that we may and ought to desire others to pray for us; but means that we may not put our trust and confidence in their prayer, as though they gave of themselves that which they desire for us in their petitions, and so give them the thanks, and ascribe to their merits, that which is given us in the name of our Master, Christ, as the deservings of his blood. Christ is my Lord, and hath deserved and also obtained power, to give me all that can be desired for me; and all that others desired for me; this is desired in Christ's name, and given at the merits of his blood. All the honour then, trust, confidence, and thanks, pertain to him also.

Some there are will haply say, How should I desire another to pray for me, and not trust to his prayer? Verily, even as I desire my neighbour to help me at my need, and yet trust not to him. Christ hath commanded us to love each other; now when I go to desire help, I put my trust in God, and complain to God first, and say, Lo Father, I go to my brother to ask help in thy name; prepare the heart of him against I come, that he may pity me and help me for thy sake, &c. Now if my brother

remember his duty and help me, I received it of God, and give God the thanks, who moved the heart of my brother, and gave my brother a courage to help me and wherewith to do it, and so hath holpen me by my brother. And I love my brother again, and say, Lo Father, I went to my brother in thy name, and he hath holpen me for thy sake; wherefore, O Father, be thou as merciful to him at his need, as he hath been to me, for thy sake, at my need. Lo now, as my brother did his duty when he helped me, so do I my duty when I pray for him again; and as I might not have put my trust and confidence in my brother's help, so may he not in my prayers. I am sure that God will help me by his promise, but am not sure that my brother will help me, though it be his duty; so am I sure that God will hear me, whatsoever I ask in Christ's name, by his promise, but am not sure that my brother will pray for me, or that he hath a good heart to God.

No. But the saints in heaven cannot but pray and be heard; no more can the saints in earth but pray and be heard. Moses, Samuel, David, Noah, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Daniel, and all the prophets, prayed and were heard, yet none of those wicked who would not put their trust in God according to their doctrine and preaching, were partakers of their prayers in the end. And as damnable as it is for the poor to trust in the riches of the richest upon the earth, so damnable is it also to leave the covenant made in Christ's blood, and to trust in the saints of heaven. They that are in heaven, know the elect that trust in Christ's blood, and profess the law of God, and only pray for them; and the saints abhor and defy these wicked idolaters who have no trust in the covenant of God, nor serve God in the spirit nor in the gospel of Christ's blood, but after their blind imaginations, every man choosing a different saint to be their mediator, to trust to, and to be saved by their merits. And their prayers and offerings are to the saints as acceptable and pleasant, as the prayer and offering of Simon Magus was to Peter.

Moreover, the saints in their most cumbrance* are most comforted, and most able to comfort others, as Paul testifies. (2 Cor. i.) Insomuch that St. Stephen and St. James prayed for them that slew them. St. Martin preached and comforted his despairing brethren even unto the last breath, and, as stories make mention, innumerable

* Greatest suffering.

more did likewise. Yea, and I have known simple unlearned persons, and that some who were great sinners, who at the hour of death have fallen flat on the blood of Christ, and have given no room to other men's either prayers or preachings, but have as strongly trusted in Christ's blood, as ever did Peter or Paul, and have thereto preached it to others and exhorted others so mightily, that an angel from heaven could not mend them.

Who then would resist God, that he might not give the same grace to M. Tracy, (who was a learned man and better seen in the works of Augustine, twenty years before he died, than ever I knew any doctor in England,) but say that he must faint and shrink when he most needed to be strong, and fear the pope's purgatory, and trust to the prayer of priests dearly paid for? I dare say he prayed for the priests when he died, that God would convert a great many of them; and if he had known of any good man among them that had needed, he would have given; and if he had known of any lack of priests, he would have given to maintain more. But now, since there be more than enough, and have more than every man a sufficient living, how should he have given them except it had been to hire their prayers, of pure mistrust in Christ's blood. If robbing of widow's houses under pretence of long prayers, be damnable, (Matt. xxiii.) then is it to be condemned also for widows to suffer themselves to be robbed by the long pattering of hypocrites, through mistrust in Christ's blood; yea, and is it not damnable to maintain such abomination? Now when this condemnation is spread over all, how can we give to them that have enough already, or how can they that have enough already take more under the name of praying, and not harden the people more in this damnable condemnation?

And concerning the burying his body, he alleges Augustine, neither is there any man, think I, so mad as to affirm that the outward pomp of the body should help the soul. Moreover, what greater sign of infidelity* is there, than to care at the time of death with what pomp the carcase shall be carried to the grave? He denies not but that a christian man should be honourably buried, namely, for the honour and hope of the resurrection, and therefore committed that care to his dear executors, his son and his wife, whom he knew would in that part do

* Unbelief.

sufficient, and leave nothing of the use of the country undone, but the abuse.

And that bestowing of a great part of his goods while he yet lived, upon the poor, to be thankful for the mercy received, without buying and selling with God, that is, without binding those poor unto any other appointed prayers than God hath bound us already, one to pray for another, one to help another, as he hath helped us; but patiently abiding for the blessings that God hath appointed unto all manner of good works, trusting faithfully to his promise, thanking, as ye may see by his words, the blood of Christ for the reward promised to his works, and not the goodness of the works, as though he had done more than his duty, or all that. And assigning by writing unto whom another part should be distributed, and giving the rest to his executors, that no strife should be; which executors were by right the heirs of all that was left to them. These things, I say, are signs evident, not only of a good christian man, but also of a perfect christian man, and of such a one as needed not to be aghast and desperate for fear of the painful pains of purgatory, which whoso feareth as they feign it, cannot but utterly abhor death; seeing that Christ is there no longer thy Lord after he hath brought thee thither, but thou art excluded from his satisfaction, and must satisfy for thyself alone. And that with suffering pain only, or else tarrying the satisfying of them that shall never satisfy enough for themselves; or gaping for the pope's pardons which have so great doubts and dangers, what is in the mind and intent of the granter, and what in the purchaser, ere they can be truly obtained with all due circumstances, and much less certitude that they have any authority at all. Paul thirsted to be dissolved, and to be with Christ; Stephen desired Christ to take his spirit; the prophets also desired God to take their souls from them; and all the saints went with a lusty courage to death, neither fearing nor teaching us to fear any such cruelty. Where hath the church then gotten authority to bind us from being so perfect, from having any such faith in the goodness of God our Father, and Lord Christ, and to make such perfectness and faith of all heresies the greatest?

Solomon* saith in the thirtieth chapter of his Proverbs, Three things are insatiable, and the fourth never saith, It is

* Or rather Agur.

enough. But there is a fifth, called dame Avarice, with as greedy a stomach, as melting a maw, as wide a throat, as gaping a mouth, and with as ravening teeth as the best, who the more she eateth, the hungrier she is. An unquiet evil never at rest, a blind monster, and a surmising beast, fearing at the fall of every leaf. What doth not hunger compel them that love this world inordinately to commit? Might that devil's belly be once full, truth should have audience, and words be construed aright, and taken in the same sense as they are meant.

Though it seem not impossible, haply, that there might be a place where the souls might be kept for a space, to be taught and instructed, yet that there should be such a jail as they jangle, and such fashions as they feign, is plainly impossible and repugnant to the scripture. For when a man is translated utterly out of the kingdom of Satan, and so confirmed in grace that he cannot sin, so burning in love that his desire cannot be plucked from God's will, and being partaker with us of all the promises of God, and under the commandments, what could be denied him in that deep innocency by his most kind Father, who hath left no mercy unpromised, and he asking it in the name of his Son Jesus, his dearly-beloved Son, who is our Lord, and hath left no mercy undeserved for us; namely, when God hath sworn that he will put off righteousness and be to us a Father, and that of all mercy, and hath slain his most dear Son, Jesus, to confirm his oath.

Finally, seeing that Christ's love taketh all to the best, and nothing is here that may not be well understood, (the circumstances declaring in what sense all was meant,) they ought to have interpreted it charitably, if aught had been found doubtful, or seeming to sound amiss. Moreover, if any thing had been therein that could not have been taken well, yet their part had been to have interpreted it as being spoken of idleness of the head, by the reason of sickness, forasmuch as the man was virtuous, wise, and well learned, and of good fame and report, and sound in the faith while he was alive. But if they say he was suspected when he was alive, then is their doing so much the worse, and it is to be thought that they feared his doctrine when he was alive, and mistrusted their own part; their consciences testifying to them that he held no other doctrine than that which was true, seeing they then neither spake nor wrote against him, nor brought him to any

examination. Besides that, some merry fellows will think that they ought first to have sent to him to learn whether he would have revoked, ere they had so despitefully burnt the dead body that could not answer for itself, nor interpret his words how he meant them, namely the man being of so worshipful and ancient a blood.

But here will I make an end, desiring the reader to look on this thing with impartial eyes, and judge whether I have expounded the words of this testament as they should seem to signify, or not. Judge also whether the maker thereof seem not by his work both virtuous and godly: which if it so be, think not that he was the worse because the dead body was burnt to ashes, but rather learn to know the great desire that hypocrites have to find one craft or other to confound the truth with, and cause it to be counted for heresy, by the simple and unlearned people, who are so ignorant that they cannot spy their subtlety. It must needs be heresy that at all touches their rotten boil; they will have it so, whosoever say nay. Only the eternal God must be prayed to, night and day, to amend them, in whose power it only lieth; who also grant them once earnestly to thirst for his true doctrine contained in the sweet and pure fountains of his scriptures, and in his paths to direct their ways. Amen.

The son of William Tracy appears to have been a follower of the same faith as his father. In the reign of queen Elizabeth, he wrote to secretary Cecil, in consequence of the queen having a crucifix in her chapel. He says,

"Pleaseth your honour to be advertised, that forasmuch as God's word, the holy scripture, threatens to root out all images, and saith that he abhorreth them, and commands his people to destroy all pictures, and to break asunder all the images of the people of Canaan; and exhorts us to beware of marring ourselves, and of the destruction of our souls; and curses the images, and the man that makes them, threatening they shall be confounded and perish; and in conclusion pronounces all them accursed that willingly transgress his commandments; all which terrible threatenings and horrible curses are easily escaped and avoided if the queen's majesty will destroy her images. Considering that God, of the other part, commandeth not any magistrate to have graven or molten image; nor commandeth any graven image or molten image to be set up upon any altar, which is the highest place of honour in our religion; nor to light any tapers to them; because God calleth them but deceit, which can do no good, and are vain, and profitable for nothing.—I am therefore so bold to put your honour in remembrance, that these holy scriptures threaten the images and the image makers, over and besides them that either honour, worship, or serve them; whereby all men may know, certainly, that God favoureth not any image, nor the use of them in us, whose hearts are prone to evil and

very evil alway. For the avoiding whereof, your honour shall do God great service, and preserve the queen's highness from great peril of God's wrath and displeasure through the use of them. In haste by your daily orator, RICH. TRACY."

The Romish ornaments however remained in the chapel royal for some years after.

Traheron, an exile for the truth in queen Mary's reign, dedicated a book to this Richard Tracy, and speaks of him as one "who had bestowed most of his time in the fruitful studies of holy scripture;" adding, "When I was destitute of father or mother, you conceived a very fatherly affection towards me, and not only brought me up in the universities of this and foreign realms, with your great cost and charges, but also most earnestly exhorted me to forsake the puddles of sophisters, and to fetch water from the pure fountains of the scripture."

The following extract from a protestation made by William Tindal, touching the resurrection of the bodies, and the state of the souls after this life, shows his sentiments upon a subject referred to in the preceding observations.

"Concerning the resurrection, I protest before God and ur Saviour Jesus Christ, and before the universal congregation that believeth in him, that I believe according to the open and manifest scriptures and catholic faith, that Christ is risen again in the flesh, which he received of his mother the blessed virgin Mary, and the body wherein he died. And that we shall all, both good and bad, rise both flesh and body, and appear together before the judgment-seat of Christ, to receive every man according to his deeds. And that the bodies of all that believe and continue in the true faith of Christ, shall be endued with like immortality and glory, as is the body of Christ.

"And I protest before God and our Saviour Christ, and all that believe in him, that I hold of the souls that are departed, as much as may be proved by manifest and open scripture; and think the souls departed in the faith of Christ and love of the law of God, to be in no worse case than the soul of Christ was from the time that he delivered his spirit into the hands of his Father, until the resurrection of his body in glory and immortality. Nevertheless I confess openly, that I am not persuaded that they be already in the full glory that Christ is in, or the elect angels of God are in. Neither is it any article of my faith; for if it so were, I see not but then the preaching of the resurrection of the flesh were a thing in vain. Notwithstanding yet I am ready to believe it, if it may be proved with open scripture."

LETTERS.

The first Letter of William Tindal to John Frith, whilst the latter was prisoner in the Tower.

The grace and peace of God our Father, and of Jesus Christ our Lord be with you, Amen.

Dearly beloved brother John, I have heard say, how the hypocrites, now that they have overcome the great business which hindered them, or at the least, have brought it at a stay, they return to their old nature again. The will of God be fulfilled, and that which he hath ordained to be, ere the world was made; that come, and his glory reign over all.

Dearly beloved, however the matter be, commit yourself wholly and only unto your most loving Father, and most kind Lord, and fear not men that threaten, nor trust men that speak fair; but trust Him that is true of promise, and able to make his word good. Your cause is Christ's gospel, a light that must be fed with the blood of faith. The lamp must be dressed and snuffed daily, and oil poured in every evening and morning, that the light go not out. Though we are sinners, yet is the cause right. If when we be buffetted for well-doing, we suffer patiently and endure, that is acceptable to God; for to that end we are called. For Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps, who did no sin. Hereby have we perceived love, that he laid down his life for us: therefore we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren. Rejoice and be glad, for great is your reward in heaven. For we suffer with him that we may also be glorified with him; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto him.

Dearly beloved, be of good courage, and comfort your soul with the hope of this high reward, and bear the image of Christ in your mortal body, that it may at his coming be made like to his, immortal; and follow the example of all your other dear brethren, who chose to suffer in hope of a better resurrection. Keep your conscience pure and undefiled, and say nothing against that. Stick to necessary

things, and remember the blasphemies of the enemies of Christ, saying, they find none but that will abjure rather than suffer the extremity. Moreover, the death of them that come again after they have once denied, though it be accepted with God, and all that believe, yet it is not glorious; for the hypocrites say, He must needs die, denying helpeth not; but might it have holpen, they would have denied five hundred times. Seeing it would not help them, therefore of pure pride and mere malice together, they speak with their mouths that which their conscience knoweth to be false. If you give yourself, cast yourself, yield yourself, commit yourself, wholly and only to your loving Father, then shall his power be in you and make you strong; and that so strong, that you shall feel no pain, which should be to another present death: and his Spirit shall speak in you, and teach you what to answer, according to his promise. He shall set out his truth by you wonderfully, and work for you above all that your heart can imagine: yea, and you are not yet dead, though the hypocrites all, with all that they can make, have sworn your death. "Una salus victis, nullam sperare salûtem;"* To look for no man's help, brings the help of God to them that seem to be overcome in the eyes of the hypocrites: yea, it shall make God to carry you through thick and thin, for his truth's sake, in spite of all the enemies of his truth. There falleth not a hair, till his hour be come: and when his hour is come, necessity carries us hence, though we be not willing. But if we be willing, then have we a reward and thanks. Fear not threatening therefore, neither be overcome of sweet words; with which twain the hypocrites shall assail you. Neither let the persuasions of worldly wisdom bear rule in your heart; no, though they be your friends that counsel you. Let Bilney be a warning to you. Let not their visor beguile your eyes. Let not your body faint. He that endureth to the end, shall be saved. If the pain be above your strength, remember, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, I will give it you." And pray to your Father in that name, and he will ease your pain, or shorten it. The Lord of peace, of hope, and of faith, be with you, Amen. WILLIAM TINDAL.

Two have suffered in Antwerp, unto the great glory of the gospel; four at Rysels in Flanders, and at Luke hath there one at the least suffered, and all nigh the same day.

* The only safety for the vanquished, is not to hope for safety.

At Roan, in France, they persecute; and at Paris are five doctors taken for the gospel. See, you are not alone; be cheerful, and remember, that among the hard-hearted in England there is a number reserved by grace; for whose sakes, if need be, you must be ready to suffer. Sir, if you may write, how short soever it be, forget it not, that we may know how it goes with you, for our heart's ease. The Lord be yet again with you, with all his plenteousness, and fill you that you flow over, Amen.

If when you have read this, you may send it to Adrian, do, I pray you, that he may know that our heart is with you.

George Joy, at Candlemas, being at Barrow, printed two leaves of Genesis, in a great form, and sent one copy to the king, and another to the new queen,* with a letter to N. for to deliver them; and to purchase license, that he might so go through all the Bible. Out of this sprung the noise of the new bible; and out of that is the great seeking for English books at all printers and bookbinders in Antwerp, and for an English priest that should print.

This chanced the 9th day of May.

Sir, your wife is well content with the will of God, and would not for her sake have the glory of God hindered.

WILLIAM TINDAL.

Another notable and worthy Letter of William Tindal, sent to the said John Frith, under the name of Jacob.

THE grace of our Saviour Jesus, his patience, meekness, humbleness, circumspection, and wisdom, be with your heart. Amen.

Dearly beloved brother Jacob, mine heart's desire in our Saviour Jesus is, that you arm yourself with patience, and be cold, sober, wise, and circumspect, and that you keep yourself low by the ground, avoiding high questions, that pass the common capacity. But expound the law truly, and open the vail of Moses, to condemn all flesh; and prove all men sinners, and that all deeds under the law, before mercy have taken away the condemnation thereof, are sin and damnable: and then as a faithful minister, set abroach the mercy of our Lord Jesus, and let the wounded consciences drink of the water of life. And then shall your preaching be with power, and not as the

* Anne Boleyn. The edition of the English bible here mentioned was completed in 1535, under the superintendance of Coverdale.

doctrine of the hypocrites; and the Spirit of God shall work with you, and all consciences shall bear record unto you, and feel that it is so. And all doctrine that casts a mist on those two, to shadow and hide them, I mean the law of God and mercy of Christ, that do you resist with all your power. Sacraments without signification, refuse. If they put significations to them, receive them if you see it may help, though it be not necessary.

Of the presence of Christ's body in the sacrament, meddle as little as you can, that there appear no division among us. Barnes will be hot against you. The Saxons are sore on the affirmative; whether constant or obstinate, I commit it to God. Philip Melancthon is said to be with the French king. There are in Antwerp, that say, they saw him come into Paris with a hundred and fifty horses, and that they spake with him.* If the Frenchmen receive the word of God, he will plant the affirmative in them. George Joy would have put forth a treatise of that matter, but I have stopt him as yet: what he will do, if he get money,† I wot not. I believe he would make many reasons, little serving to the purpose. My mind is, that nothing be put forth till we hear how you shall have sped. I would have the right use preached, and the presence to be an indifferent thing, till the matter might be reasoned in peace, at leisure by both parties. If you be required, show the phrases of the scripture, and let them talk what they will. For as to believe that God is every where, hurts no man that worships him no where but within in the heart, in spirit and verity, even so, to believe that the body of Christ is every where, though it cannot be proved, hurts no man, that worships him no where save in the faith of his gospel. You perceive my mind; howbeit, if God show you otherwise, it is free for you to do as he moves you.

I guessed long ago that God would send a dazing‡ into the head of the spiritualty, to catch themselves in their own subtlety, and I trust it is come to pass. And now methinks I smell a counsel to be taken, little for their profits in time to come. But you must understand, that it is not of a pure heart and for love of the truth, but to avenge

* This report was incorrect. The king of France invited Melancthon to visit Paris, but various circumstances connected with the Reformation in Germany prevented his proceeding thither, although he fully intended it.

† To enable him to print. ‡ Confusion.

themselves, and to eat the harlot's flesh, and to suck the marrow of her bones.* Wherefore cleave fast to the rock of the help of God, and commit the end of all things to him; and if God shall call you, that you may then use the wisdom of the worldly, as far as you perceive the glory of God may come thereof, refuse it not: and ever thrust in, that the scripture may be in the mother tongue, and learning set up in the universities. But and if aught be required contrary to the glory of God and his Christ, then stand fast, and commit yourself to God, and be not overcome of men's persuasions, which haply shall say, we see no other way to bring in the truth.

Brother Jacob, beloved in my heart, there lives not in whom I have so good hope and trust, and in whom mine heart rejoices and my soul comforts herself, as in you. Not the thousandth part so much for your learning, and what other gifts else you have, as that you will creep low by the ground, and walk in those things which the conscience may feel, and not in the imaginations of the brain; in fear, and not in boldness; in open necessary things, and not to pronounce or define of hid secrets, or things that neither help nor hinder, whether they be so or no; in unity, and not in seditious opinions. Insomuch, that if you be sure you know; yet in things that may abide leisure, you will defer, or say, till others agree with you, Methinks the text requires this sense or understanding; yea and that if you be sure that your part be good, and another hold the contrary, yet if it be a thing that makes no matter, you will laugh and let it pass, and refer the thing to other men, and stick you stiffly and stubbornly only in earnest and necessary things. And I trust you are persuaded even so of me. For I call God to record, against the day we shall appear before our Lord Jesus, to give a reckoning of our doings, that I never altered one syllable of God's word against my conscience; nor would this day, if all that is in the earth, whether it be pleasure, honour, or riches, might be given me. Moreover, I take God to record to my conscience, that I desire of God to myself in this world, no more than that without which I cannot keep his laws.

Finally, if there were in me any gift that could help at hand, and aid you if need required, I promise you I would not be far off, and would commit the end to God; my soul is not faint, though my body be weary. But God

* The dissolution of the monasteries and seizing of their revenues.

hath made me evil favoured in this world, and without grace in the sight of men, speechless and rude, dull and slow witted; your part shall be to supply that which lacketh in me, remembering, that as lowliness of heart shall make you high with God, even so meekness of words shall make you sink into the hearts of men. Nature gives age authority, but meekness is the glory of youth, and gives them honour. Abundance of love makes me exceed in babbling.

Sir, as concerning purgatory, and many other things, if you be demanded, you may say, if you err, the spiritualty hath so led you, and that they have taught you to believe, as you do. For they preached to you all such things out of God's word, and alleged a thousand texts, by reason of which texts, you believed as they taught you. But now you find them liars, and that the texts mean no such things, and therefore you can believe them no longer, but are as you were, before they taught you, and believe no such thing; howbeit, you are ready to believe, if they have any other way to prove it, for without proof you cannot believe them, when you have found them with so many lies. If you perceive wherein we may help, either in being still, or doing somewhat, let us have word, and I will do mine uttermost.

My lord of London hath a servant called John Tisen, with a red beard, and a black reddish head, and was once my scholar; he was seen in Antwerp, but came not among the Englishmen; whether he is gone a secret ambassador, I wot not.

The mighty God of Jacob be with you to supplant his enemies, and give you the favour of Joseph; and the wisdom and the spirit of Stephen be with your heart and with your mouth, and teach your lips what they shall say, and how to answer to all things. He is our God if we despair in ourselves, and trust in him: and his is the glory, Amen. WILLIAM TINDAL.

I hope our redemption is nigh.

Among the Cotton MSS. in the British Museum are several letters relative to Tindal, which show the pains which were taken to induce him to leave the continent and return to England. The following extract from a letter written by Vaughan, the English agent in Holland, to Henry VIII. shows how strongly the mind of Tindal was set upon the circulation of the scriptures in his native tongue.

From Vaughan to king Henry VIII. May 20th, 1531.

I have again been in hand to persuade Tindal; and, to draw him rather to favour my persuasions, and not to think the same feigned, I showed him a clause contained in master Cromwell's letter, containing these words following:—"And notwithstanding other the premises in this my letter contained, if it were possible by good and wholesome exhortations, to reconcile and convert the said Tindal from the train and affection which he now is in, and to extirpate and take away the opinions and fantasies forcely rooted in him, I doubt not but the king's highness would be much joyous of his conversion and amendment. And so, being converted, if then he would return into his realm, undoubtedly the king's royal majesty is so inclined to mercy, pity, and compassion, that he refuseth none which he seeth to submit themselves to the obedience and good order of the world."

In these words, I thought to be such sweetness and virtues as were able to pierce the hardest heart of the world, and as I thought, so it came to pass; for after sight thereof, I perceived the man to be exceeding altered, and to take the same very near unto his heart, in such wise that water stood in his eyes, and he answered, "What gracious words are these! I assure you," said he, "if it would stand with the king's most gracious pleasure, to grant only a bare text of the scriptures to be put forth among his people, like as is put forth among the subjects of the emperor in these parts, and of other christian princes, be it of the translation of what person soever shall please his majesty, I shall immediately make faithful promise never to write more, nor abide two days in these parts after the same; but immediately repair into his realm, and there most humbly submit myself at the feet of his royal majesty, offering my body to suffer what pain or torture, yea, what death his grace will, so this be obtained. And till that time, I will abide the aspersions of all chances, whatsoever shall come, and endure my life in as many pains as it is able to bear and suffer. And as concerning my reconciliation, his grace may be assured, that whatsoever I have said or written, in all my life, against the honour of God's word, and so proved, the same shall I before his majesty and all the world, utterly renounce and forsake, and with most humble and meek mind embrace the truth, abhorring all error soever sooner at the most gracious and benign request of his royal majesty, of whose wisdom, prudence, and learning I hear so great praise and commendation, than of any other creature living. But if those things which I have written be true, and stand with God's word, why should his majesty, having so excellent a guide of knowledge in the scriptures, move me to do any thing against my conscience?" With many other words which were too long to write. Finally, I have some good hope in the main, and would not doubt to bring him to some good point, were it that something now and then might proceed from your majesty towards me, whereby the man might take the better comfort of my persuasions.

I advertised the same Tindal, that he should not put forth the same books till your most gracious pleasure were known, whereunto he answered, mine advertisement came too late, for he feared lest one that had his copy would put it very shortly in print, which he would hinder if he could; if not, there is no remedy. I shall stay it as much as I can; as yet it is not come forth, nor will not in a while, by that I perceive.

THE END.

WRITINGS

OF

JOHN FRITH,

MARTYR, 1533;

AND OF

DR. ROBERT BARNES,

MARTYR, 1541.

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SOME ACCOUNT

OF

JOHN FRITH,

MARTYR, 1533.

John Frith was the son of an innkeeper at Sevenoaks in Kent, where he was born about the year 1503. From his childhood he was remarkable for his abilities and his inclination for learning, in which he made very considerable progress. He studied at Cambridge, where he was of King's college, and was one of the persons selected by cardinal Wolsey, on account of their learning, to be members of his new college at Oxford, which he founded in 1527, upon a very magnificent scale, and enlarged by suppressing several monasteries and other ecclesiastical institutions. While in London, about 1525, Frith had become acquainted with Tindal, through whose instructions he first received into his heart the seed of the gospel and pure godliness. Frith and several of his companions at Oxford soon evinced an attachment for the doctrines of the truth, which excited the enmity of the Romanists, who imprisoned them in a deep cellar belonging to the college, where the salt fish was kept. The damp and noisome stench of this place affected them so that several of their number died.

After some time Frith was released. In 1528 he went beyond sea, where he remained two years, during which interval he made considerable progress in the knowledge of the truth, and wrote his book against purgatory. He then returned; he went to Reading, having, it is supposed, some expectations from the abbot of that place. These, however, appear to have been disappointed; he was taken up and set in the stocks as a vagrant. After being confined some time, when ready to perish with hunger, he asked to see the schoolmaster of the town, who, discovering his abilities and learning, procured his release, and gave him assistance.

Frith then went to London, where he endeavoured to remain concealed, but he soon became "a marked man," and was earnestly sought for by sir Thomas More, who offered large rewards for his apprehension. In his book against purgatory, Frith had written in answer to sir Thomas More's reply to the Supplication of the Beggars, (see page 30,) showing that the doctrine of purgatory was opposed to the truths of scripture respecting the pardon of sin and salvation by Christ alone. Frith was apprehended at Milton in Essex, endeavouring to escape to the continent, and sent to the Tower. There he gained the favour of his keeper, so that he was allowed sometimes to visit the followers of the truth in the city. Strype relates, that "When John Frith was in the tower, he came to Petit's key in the night, notwithstanding the strait watch and ward by commandment. At whose first coming, Mr. Petit was in doubt whether it was Mr. Frith or a vision; no less doubting than the apostles, when Rhoda the maid brought tidings that Peter was out of prison. But Mr. Frith showed him that it was God that wrought him that liberty in the heart of his keeper, Phillips, who, upon the condition of his own word and promise, let him go at liberty in the night to consult with godly men." Petit was a wealthy merchant of London, who was member of parliament for the city many years, but being suspected by sir Thomas More of favouring those of the new religion, and assisting to print their books, he was imprisoned and laid in a dungeon upon a pad of straw, where he contracted a disease of which he soon afterwards died.

While in confinement, Frith was induced by a friend to commit to writing his opinions upon the sacrament of the Lord's supper. These we are told were four. 1. That the matter of the sacrament is no article of faith necessary to be believed under pain of damnation. 2. That forasmuch as Christ's natural body hath all properties of our body, sin only excepted, it cannot be, neither is it agreeable unto reason, that he should be in two places or more at once, contrary to the nature of our body. 3. Moreover it is not right or necessary, that we should in this place understand Christ's words according to the literal sense, but rather according to the order and phrase of speech, comparing phrase with phrase, according to the analogy of the scripture. 4. The sacrament ought to be received according to the true

and right institution of Christ, albeit the order which at this time has crept into the church, and is used now-a-days by the priests, ever so much differs from it.

At that period there was in London a tailor named William Holt, who pretended to be very friendly towards the followers of the truth. Having obtained a copy of this writing of Frith's, he carried it to sir Thomas More, and it was the cause of Frith's death. More, at that time, was very active in defence of the Romish doctrines; he not only imprisoned Frith, but printed a refutation of his arguments. His book, however, was kept from Frith and his friends with much care for some time; with considerable difficulty he obtained a written copy, and saw the printed work during an examination before the bishop of Winchester. Frith then replied to More's answer in an able treatise, written under all the disadvantages of strict confinement.

Frith had now attracted considerable notice, as the first who publicly advocated the doctrines of Zuingle, in England. One of the king's chaplains alluded to him in a sermon, at the instigation of the bishop of Winchester; in consequence of which his imprisonment in the tower was terminated by an order to the bishops to examine him. The subsequent account is best given in the words of Fox.

"That there should be no concourse of citizens at the said examination, my lord of Canterbury removed to Croydon, unto whom resorted the rest of the commissioners. Now, before the day appointed, my lord of Canterbury sent one of his gentlemen, and one of his porters, whose name was Perlebean, a Welshman born, to fetch John Frith from the Tower unto Croydon. This gentleman had both my lord's letters and the king's ring unto my lord Fitzwilliams, constable of the Tower, then lying in Canon-row, at Westminster, in extreme anguish and pain from a disorder, for the delivery of the prisoner. Master Fitzwilliams, more passionate than patient, understanding for what purpose my lord's gentleman was come, banned and cursed Frith and other heretics, saying, Take this my ring unto the lieutenant of the Tower, and receive your man, your heretic, with you, and I am glad that I am rid of him.

"When Frith was delivered unto my lord of Canterbury's gentleman, they twain, with Perlebean, sitting in a wherry and rowing towards Lambeth, the said gentleman much lamenting

in his mind the infelicity of the said Frith, began to exhort him, to consider in what state he was, a man altogether cast away in this world, if he did not look wisely to himself. And yet though his cause was ever so dangerous, he might, by somewhat relenting to authority, and so giving place for a time, help both himself out of trouble, and when opportunity and occasion should serve, prefer his cause, which he then went about to defend, declaring further that he had many well-willers and friends, who would stand on his side, so far as they were able, and durst do; adding hereunto, that it were great pity that he, being of such singular knowledge both in the Latin and Greek, both ready and ripe in all kind of learning, and as well in the scriptures as in the ancient doctors, should now suddenly suffer all those singular gifts to perish with him, with little commodity or profit to the world, and less comfort to his wife and children, and others his kinsfolks and friends. And as for the verity of your opinion in the sacrament of the body and blood of our Saviour Christ, added he, it is so untimely opened here amongst us in England, that you shall rather do harm than good; wherefore be wise and be ruled by good counsel until a better opportunity may serve. This I am sure of, that my lord Cromwell and my lord of Canterbury, much favouring you, and knowing you to be an eloquent, learned young man, and now towards the felicity of your life, young in years, old in knowledge, and of great forwardness, and likely to be a most profitable member for this realm, will never permit you to sustain any open shame, if you will somewhat be advised by their counsel. On the other side, if you stand stiffly to your opinion, it is not possible to save your life. For like as you have good friends, so have you mortal foes and enemies.

"I most heartily thank you, said master Frith unto the gentleman, both for your good will and for your counsel; by which I well perceive that you intend well unto me; howbeit, my cause and conscience is such, that in no wise I may not, and cannot for any worldly respect, without danger of damnation, start aside, and fly from the true knowledge and doctrine which I have conceived of the supper of the Lord or the communion, otherwise called the sacrament of the altar; for if it be my chance to be demanded, what I think in that behalf, I must needs say my knowledge and my conscience, as partly I have

written therein already, though I should presently lose twenty lives if I had so many. And this you shall well understand, that I am not so unfurnished, either of scripture or ancient doctors, schoolmen, or others for my defence; so that if I may be indifferently* heard, I am sure that mine adversaries cannot justly condemn me or mine assertion, but that they shall condemn with me St. Augustine and the most part of the old writers; yea, the very bishops of Rome of the oldest sort shall also say for me and defend my cause. Yea, marry, quoth the gentleman, you say well, if you might be indifferently heard. But I much doubt thereof, for our master Christ was not indifferently heard, nor should be, as I think, if he were now present again in the world, especially in this your opinion, the same being so odious unto the world, and we so far off from the true knowledge thereof.

"Well, well, said Frith then unto the gentleman, I know very well that this doctrine of the sacrament of the altar which I hold, and have opened, contrary to the opinion of this realm, is very hard meat to be digested, both of the clergy and laity thereof. But this I will say to you, (taking the gentleman by the hand,) that if you live but twenty years more, whatsoever become of me, you shall see this whole realm of mine opinion concerning this sacrament of the altar; namely, the whole estate of the same, though some men particularly shall not be fully persuaded therein. And if it come not so to pass, then account me the vainest man that ever you heard speak with tongue. Besides this, you say that my death would be sorrowful and uncomfortable unto my friends. I grant that for a small time it would be so; but if I should so mollify, qualify, and temper my cause in such sort as to deserve only to be kept in prison, that would not only be a much longer grief unto me, but also to my friends would breed no small disquietness, both of body and of mind. And therefore all things well and rightly pondered, my death in this cause shall be better unto me and all mine, than life in continual bondage and penuries. And almighty God knoweth what he hath to do with his poor servant, whose cause I now defend and not my own; from the which I assuredly do intend, God willing, never to start or otherwise to give place, so long as God will give me life.

* Impartially.

"This communication, or the like in effect, my lord of Canterbury's gentleman and Frith had, coming in a wherry upon the Thames from the Tower to Lambeth.

"Now, when they were landed, after repast being taken at Lambeth, the gentleman, the porter, and Frith went forward towards Croydon on foot. This gentleman still lamenting with himself the hard and cruel destiny of Frith, if he once came amongst the bishops; and now also perceiving the exceeding constancy of Frith, devised with himself some way or means to convey him quite out of their hands, and thereupon considering that there were no more persons there to convey the prisoner, but the porter and himself, he took in hand to win the porter to his purpose. Quoth the gentleman unto Perlebean the porter, they twain privately walking by themselves without the hearing of Frith, You have heard this man I am sure, and noted his talk since he came from the Tower.—Yea, that I have right well marked him, quoth the porter, and I never heard so constant a man nor so eloquent a person.—You have heard nothing, quoth the gentleman, in respect both of his knowledge and eloquence: if he might either in university or pulpit freely declare his learning, you would then much more marvel at his knowledge. I take him to be such a one of his age in all kind of learning and knowledge of tongues, as this realm never yet brought forth, and yet those singular gifts in him are no more considered of our bishops than if he were a very dolt or an idiot; yea, they abhor him as a devil therefore, and covet utterly to extinguish him as a member of the devil, without any consideration of God's special gifts.—Marry, quoth the porter, if there were nothing else in him but the consideration of his personage, both comely and amiable, and of natural disposition, gentle, meek, and humble: it were pity that he should be cast away.

"The gentleman then proposed that they should suffer Frith to escape, saying, You see yonder hill before us named Bristow (Brixton) causeway; there are great woods on both sides; when we come there we will permit Frith to go into the woods on the left hand of the way, whereby he may convey himself into Kent among his friends, for he is a Kentish man; and when he is gone we will linger an hour or two about the highway, until it draw towards night. Then in great haste we will

approach Streatham and make an outcry in the town that our prisoner is broken from us on the right hand towards Wandsworth, so that we will draw as many as we can of the town to search the country that way for our prisoner, declaring that we followed him above a mile or more, and at length lost him in the woods. So when my lord of Canterbury's gentleman came nigh to the hill, he joined himself in company with the said Frith, and, calling him by his name, said, Now, master Frith, let us twain commune together another while; you must consider that the journey which I have now taken in hand thus in bringing you to Croydon, as a sheep to the slaughter, it grieveth me, and as it were overwhelmeth me in cares and sorrows, that I little mind what danger I fall in, so that I could find the means to deliver you out of the lion's mouth. And yet yonder good fellow and I have devised a means, whereby you may both easily escape from this great and eminent danger at hand, and we also be rid from any vehement suspicion.

"When Frith had heard all the matter concerning his delivery, he said to the gentleman, with a smiling countenance, Is this the effect of your secret consultation, thus long between you twain? Surely, surely, you have lost a great deal more labour in times past, and so are you like to do this, for if you should both leave me here, and go to Croydon declaring to the bishops that you had lost Frith, I would surely follow after as fast as I might, and bring them news that I had found and brought Frith again. Do you think that I am afraid to declare my opinion unto the bishops of England in a manifest truth?

"You are a foolish man, quoth the gentleman, thus to talk: as though your reasoning with them might do some good. But I do much marvel, that you were so willing to fly the realm before you were taken, and now so unwilling to save yourself.—There was and is a great diversity of escaping, between the one and the other, quoth Frith. Before, I was indeed desirous to escape, because I was not attached, but at liberty; which liberty I would fain have enjoyed for the maintenance of my study beyond the sea, where I was reader in the Greek tongue, according to St. Paul's counsel. Howbeit, now being taken by the higher power, and as it were, by almighty God's permission and providence, delivered into the hands of the bishops only for religion and doctrine's sake, such as in conscience and

under pain of damnation I am bound to maintain and defend; if I should now start aside and run away, I should run from my God and from the testimony of his holy word, worthy then of a thousand hells. And therefore I most heartily thank you both, for your good wills towards me, beseeching you to bring me where I was appointed to be brought, for else I will go thither all alone. And so with a cheerful and merry countenance he went with them, spending the time with pleasant and godly communications, until they came to Croydon, where for that night he was well entertained in the porter's lodge. On the morrow he was called before certain bishops and other learned men sitting in commission with my lord of Canterbury, to be examined, where he showed himself passing ready and ripe in answering to all objections, as some then reported, incredibly and contrary to all men's expectations. And his allegations both out of Augustine and other ancient fathers of the church, were such that some of them much doubted of Augustine's authority in that behalf. Insomuch that it was reported by them who were nigh and about the archbishop of Canterbury, (who then was not fully resolved of the sincere truth of that article,) that when they had finished their examination of Frith, the archbishop, conferring with Dr. Heath privately between themselves, said, This man hath wonderfully laboured in this matter, and yet in mine opinion he taketh the doctors amiss. Well, my lord, said Dr. Heath, there was no man who could do away his authorities from St. Augustine. Then he began to repeat them again, inferring and applying them so strongly that my lord said, I see that you with a little more study will easily be brought to Frith's opinion;* and some there present openly reported that Dr. Heath was as able to defend Frith's assertions of the sacrament, as Frith was himself.

"This learned young man being thus thoroughly sifted at Croydon, to understand what he could say and do in his cause, there was no man willing to prefer him to answer in open disputation as poor Lambert was. But without regard of learning or good knowledge, he was sent and detained unto the butcher's stall; I mean bishop Stokesly's consistory, there to hear, not the

* This was not realized with respect to Heath, who was archbishop of York in queen Mary's days, but Cranmer himself was led to see the truth of Frith's doctrine, and was influenced by his writings.

opinion of Augustine and other ancient fathers of Christ's primitive church, of the said sacrament, but either to be instructed and to hear the maimed and half cut-away sacrament of antichrist the bishop of Rome, with the gross and fleshly imagination thereof, or else to perish in the fire, as he most certainly did, after he had before the bishops of London, Winchester, and Chichester, in the consistory in St. Paul's church, most plainly and sincerely confessed his doctrine and faith in this weighty matter. He left an account of his examinations.

"Sentence being passed and read against him, the bishop of London (Stokesly) directed his letter to the mayor and sheriffs of the city of London, for receiving of John Frith into their charge; who was delivered over unto them. While in Newgate Frith was put into the dungeon under the gate, and laden with bolts and irons as many as he could bear, and his neck with a collar of iron made fast to a post, so that he could neither stand upright nor stoop down, yet was he there continually occupied in writing, namely with a candle, both day and night, for there came no other light into that place. In this sad case he remained several days. On the fourth day of July, in the year 1533, he was by them carried to Smithfield to be burned; and when he was tied unto the stake, there sufficiently appeared with what constancy and courage he suffered death. For when the fagots and fire were put unto him, he willingly embraced the same; thereby declaring, with what uprightness of mind he suffered his death for Christ's sake: and the true doctrine, whereof that day he gave with his blood a perfect and firm testimony.

"A young man, apprenticed to a tailor in Watling-street, named Andrew Hewit, was burned at the same stake with Frith, for holding the same opinions. When before the bishops, Hewit was asked how he believed concerning the sacrament. He replied, Even as John Frith does. Bishop Stokesly said, Why Frith is a heretic, and already condemned to be burned; and except thou revoke thy opinion, thou shalt be burned also with him. His reply simply was, Truly I am content withal: upon which he was condemned and burned with Frith!

"When they were at the stake, doctor Cook, a priest in London, openly admonished the people, that they should in no wise pray for them—no more than they would do for a dog.

At which words Frith, smiling, desired the Lord to forgive them. These words did not a little move the people unto anger, and not without good cause. The wind made his death somewhat the longer, which bore away the flame from him unto his fellow that was burning with him; but he had established his mind with such patience, God giving him strength, that, even as though he had felt no pain in that long torment, he seemed rather to rejoice for his fellow, than to be careful for himself.—This, truly, is the power and strength of Christ, striving and vanquishing in his saints; who sanctify us together with them, and direct us in all things to the glory of his most holy name. Amen."

A Letter of John Frith to his friends, concerning his troubles: wherein after he had first with a brief preface saluted them, entering then into the matter, thus he writeth,—being the articles wherefore he died, which he wrote in Newgate the 23rd day of June, 1533.*

I doubt not, dear brethren, but that it doth vex you, to see the one part have all the words, and freely to speak what they list, and the other to be put to silence, and not to be heard indifferently.† But refer your matters to God, who shortly shall judge after another fashion. In the mean time I have written unto you as briefly as I may, what articles were objected against me, and what were the principal points of my condemnation, that ye might understand the matter certainly.

The whole matter of this my examination was comprehended in two special articles, that is to say, of purgatory, and of the substance of the sacrament.

And first of all, as touching purgatory, they inquired of me whether I did believe there was any place to purge the spots and filth of the soul after this life. But I said, that I thought there was no such place. For man, said I, doth consist, and is made only of two parts, that is to say, of the body and the soul,

* This letter is to be seen in the end of that excellent and worthy work which he made in the Tower concerning the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ.—*Fox.*

This letter is printed from the copy in Fox's Acts and Monuments, which is fuller than the original tract or the folio edition, but does not differ in any essential respect.

† Impartially.

whereof the one is purged here in this world, by the cross of Christ, which he layeth upon every child that he receiveth; as affliction, worldly oppression, persecution, imprisonment, &c. and last of all, the reward of sin, which is death, is laid upon us; but the soul is purged with the word of God, which we receive through faith, to the salvation both of body and soul. Now if ye can show me a third part of man beside the body and the soul, I will also grant unto you the third place, which you call purgatory. But because ye cannot do this, I must also of necessity deny unto you the bishop of Rome's purgatory. Nevertheless, I count neither part a necessary article of our faith, to be believed under pain of damnation, whether there be such a purgatory or no.

Secondly, they examined me touching the sacrament of the altar, whether it was the very body of Christ or no.

I answered, that I thought it was both Christ's body, and also our body, as St. Paul teaches us in the first epistle to the Corinthians, and tenth chapter. For in that it is made one bread of many corns,* it is called our body, which being divers and many members, are associated and gathered together into one fellowship or body. Likewise of the wine, which is gathered of many clusters of grapes, and is made into one liquor. But the same bread again, in that it is broken, is the body of Christ, declaring his body to be broken and delivered unto death, to redeem us from our iniquities.

Furthermore, in that the sacrament is distributed, it is Christ's body; signifying that as verily as that sacrament is distributed unto us, so verily is Christ's body and the fruit of his passion distributed unto all faithful people.

In that it is received, it is Christ's body, signifying that as verily as the outward man receiveth the sacrament with his teeth and mouth, so verily doth the inward man through faith receive Christ's body and fruit of his passion, and is as sure of it, as of the bread which he eateth.

Well, said they, dost thou not think that his very natural body, flesh, blood, and bone, is really contained under the sacrament, and there present without all figure or similitude? No, said I, I do not so think. Notwithstanding I would not that any should count that I make my saying, which is the negative, any article of faith. For even as I say, that you

* Grains of corn.

ought not to make any necessary article of the faith of your part, which is the affirmative, so I say again, that we make no necessary article of the faith of our part, but leave it indifferent for all men to judge therein, as God shall open their hearts, and no side to condemn or despise the other, but to nourish in all things brotherly love, and one to bear another's infirmity.

After this, they alleged the place of St. Augustine, where he saith, "He was carried in his own hands."

Whereunto I answered, that St. Augustine was a plain interpreter of himself: for he hath in another place, "He was carried *as it were* in his own hands:" which is a phrase of speech not of one that doth simply affirm, but only of one expressing a thing by a similitude. And albeit that St. Augustine had not thus expounded himself, yet he, writing unto Boniface, plainly admonishes all men, that the sacraments do represent and signify those things whereof they are sacraments, and many times even of the similitudes of the things themselves they take their names; and therefore according to this rule it may be said, he was borne in his own hands, when he bare in his hands the sacrament of his body and blood.

Then they alleged a place of Chrysostom, which at the first blush may seem to make much for them: who, in a certain homily upon the Supper, writeth thus: "Dost thou see bread and wine? Do they depart from thee into the draught, as other meats do? No, God forbid. For as in wax, when it cometh to the fire, nothing of the substance remaineth nor abideth; so likewise think that the mysteries are consumed by the substance of the body, &c."

These words I expounded by the words of the same doctor, who in another homily saith on this manner; "The inward eyes as soon as they see the bread, they flee over all creatures, and do not think of the bread that is baked of the baker, but of the bread of everlasting life, which is signified by the mystical bread." Now confer these places together, and you shall perceive that the last expoundeth the first plainly. For he saith; Dost thou see the bread and wine? I answer by the second, Nay. For the inward eyes as soon as they see the bread, do pass over all creatures, and do not any longer think upon the bread, but upon him that is signified by the bread. And after this manner he seeth it, and again, he seeth it not. For as he seeth it with his outward and carnal eyes, so with his

inward eyes he seeth it not; that is to say, regardeth not the bread, or thinketh not upon it, but is otherwise occupied. Even as when we play or do any thing else negligently, we commonly are wont to say, we see not what we do; not that indeed we do not see that which we go about, but because our mind is fixed on some other thing, and does not attend unto that which the eyes do see.

In like manner may it be answered unto that which follows, "Do they avoid from thee, saith he, into the draught as other meats do?" I will not so say. For other meats passing through, after they have of themselves given nourishment unto the body, are voided into the draught; but this is a spiritual meat, which is received by faith, and nourisheth both body and soul unto everlasting life; neither is it at any time avoided as other meats are.

And, as I said before, that the external eyes do behold the bread, which the inward eyes, being otherwise occupied, do not behold or think upon. Even so our outward man doth digest the bread, and void it into the draught; but the inward man doth neither regard nor think upon it, but thinketh upon the thing itself that is signified by that bread. And therefore Chrysostom a little before the words which they alleged, saith, "Lift up your minds and hearts." Whereby he admonishes us to look upon and consider those heavenly things which are represented and signified by the bread and wine, and not to mark the bread and wine itself.

Here they said, that was not Chrysostom's mind; but that by this example he declareth that there remained no bread nor wine. I answered, that was false; for the example that he taketh, tendeth to no other purpose, but to call away our spiritual eyes from the beholding of visible things, and to transport them another way, as if the things that are seen were of no force. Therefore he draweth away our mind from the consideration of these things, and fixeth it upon him who is signified unto us by the same. The very words which follow sufficiently declare this to be the true meaning of the author, whereas he commandeth us to consider all things with our inward eyes; that is to say, spiritually.

But whether Chrysostom's words do tend either to this or that sense, yet do they indifferently make on our part against our adversaries, which way soever we do understand them.

For if he thought that the bread and wine do remain, we have no further to travel; but if he meant contrariwise, that they do not remain, but that the natures of the bread and wine are altered, then are the bread and wine falsely named sacraments and mysteries, which can be said in no place to be in the nature of things; for that which is in no place, how can it be a sacrament, or supply the room of a mystery? Finally, if he spake only of the outward forms and shapes, as we call them, it is most certain that they do continually remain, and that they, by the substance of the body, are not consumed in any place; wherefore it must necessarily follow the words of Chrysostom are to be understood in such sense as I have declared.

Here peradventure many would marvel, that forsomuch as the matter touching the substance of the sacrament, being separate from the articles of faith, and binding no man of necessity, either unto salvation or damnation, whether he believe it or not, but rather may be left indifferently unto all men, freely to judge either on the one part or on the other, according unto his own mind; so that neither part do contemn or despise the other, but that all love and charity be still holden and kept in this dissention of opinions, what then the cause is, why I would therefore so willingly suffer death. The cause why I die is this; for that I cannot agree with the divines and other head prelates, that it should be necessarily determined to be an article of faith, and that we should believe, under pain of damnation, the substance of the bread and wine to be changed into the body and blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ, the form and shape only not being changed. Which if it were most true, as they shall never be able to prove it by any authority of the scripture or doctors, yet shall they not so bring to pass, that that doctrine, were it ever so true, should be holden for a necessary article of faith. For there are many things, both in the scriptures and other places, which we are not bound of necessity to believe as articles of faith. So it is true, I was a prisoner and in bonds when I wrote these things, and yet for all that I will not hold it as an article of faith,* but that you may without danger of damnation, either believe it, or think the contrary.

But as touching the cause why I cannot affirm the doctrine of transubstantiation, divers reasons lead me thereunto. First,

* This is to be weighed with the time when Frith wrote.—*Fox.*

for that I plainly see it to be false and vain, and not to be grounded upon any reason, either of the scriptures, or of approved doctors.

Secondly, for that by my example I would not be an author unto christians to admit any thing as a matter of faith, more than the necessary points of their creed, wherein the whole sum of our salvation doth consist, especially such things, the belief whereof have no certain argument of authority or reason. I added moreover, that their church, as they call it, hath no such power and authority, that it either ought or may bind us, under the peril of our souls, to the believing of any such articles.

Thirdly, because I will not for the favour of our divines or priests, be prejudicial in this point unto so many nations, of Germans, Helvetians, and others, which, altogether rejecting the transubstantiation of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, are all of the same opinion that I am, as well those that take Luther's part, as those that hold with Œcolampadius. Which things standing in this case, I suppose there is no man of any upright conscience who will not allow the reason of my death, which I am put unto for this only cause, that I do not think transubstantiation, although it were true indeed, to be established for an article of faith.

Among the Cotton MSS. in the British Museum (Galba B. X.) are two letters, one from Cromwell to Vaughan, the royal agent in the Low Countries, the other from Vaughan to the king, in which mention is made of Frith, and which show that he was accounted of considerable importance. Vaughan writes:—

"As concerning a young man being in these parts, named Frith, of whom I lately advertised your majesty, and whom your royal majesty giveth me in commandment with friendly persuasions, admonitions, and wholesome counsels to advertise to leave his wilful opinions and errors, and to return into his native country, I shall not fail, according unto your most gracious commandment, to endeavour to the utmost of my power to persuade him accordingly, so soon as my chance shall be to meet with him. Howbeit, I am informed that he is very lately married in Holland, but in what place I cannot tell. This

marriage may by chance hinder my persuasions. I suppose him to have been thereunto driven through poverty, which is to be pitied, and his qualities considered."

Cromwell writes thus to Vaughan:—

"As touching Frith mentioned in your said letter, the king's highness hearing well of his towardness in good love and learning, doth much lament that he should in such wise as he doth, set forth, show, and apply his learning and doctrine, in the semination and sowing forth evil seed of damnable and detestable heresies, maintaining, bolstering, and administering the venomous and pestiferous works, erroneous and seditious opinions, of the said Tindal and others, wherein his highness like a most virtuous and benign prince and guardian, having charge of his people and subjects, being very sorry to hear tell that any of the same should in such wise run headlong and digress from the laws of almighty God, and wholesome doctrines of holy fathers, unto such damnable heresies and seditious opinions, is inclined willingly and greatly desirous to provide for the same."

The letter then proceeds to state the king's readiness to provide for Frith, if he could be brought to forsake the doctrines of Tindal, and, leaving his "wilful opinions, like a good christian would return to his native country," where he should find the king most favourable. Cromwell further exhorts Vaughan to use his best endeavours to win the refugees from their opinions, adding, "in which doing ye shall not only highly merit in almighty God, but also deserve highly thanks of the king's royal majesty, who will not forget your devoirs and labours in that behalf, so that his majesty may find that you effectually do intend the same."

Frith's works, as reprinted by Fox, consist of, his book of purgatory.—An answer to Rastal's dialogue.—An answer to sir Thomas More.—Answer to Fisher, bishop of Rochester.—A bulwark against Rastal.—Judgment upon M. Tracy's will and testament.—A letter written from the Tower to Christ's congregation.—A mirror or glass to know thyself.—A treatise upon the sacrament of baptism.—Antithesis between Christ and the pope.—A book of the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ.—Articles for which he died. He also translated some writings of foreign reformers.

A MIRROR,

OR

GLASS TO KNOW THYSELF,

BEING A TREATISE, MADE BY JOHN FRITH, WHILST HE WAS PRISONER IN THE TOWER OF LONDON, A. D. 1532.

The Preface.

I WAS desired by a faithful friend, to whom I am so much bound, that he might lawfully have commanded me, that I would make him a little treatise, by which he might be somewhat instructed to know himself, and so give God thanks for the benefits which he hath so abundantly poured upon him. This I took upon me very gladly, partly, to fulfil his right wise request, which I trust shall be to the great profit of Christ's flock, and partly, to declare what I think, both of myself and of all others.

Herein may all men see what they have received of God, and how they ought to bestow the talent that is committed unto them; which, if you note well, it will cause you to say with the wise man, Solomon; Every man living is nothing but vanity: which also the prophet David confirms, saying, If all men living were weighed in one balance, and vanity placed in the balance against them, it should quite weigh them down, and be heavier than all they. As by example, if a man praise a very fool, and think his wit good and profound, then is that person indeed more fool than the other. And even so, since man doth praise and commend riches, honour, beauty, strength, and such other vain and transitory things, which are but as a dream, and vanish like a flower in the field, when a man should have most need of them, it follows well that he himself is more vain than those things, which are but vanity. For if it were possible, that thou shouldest have

all these things a hundred years continually, without any trouble or adversity, as never man had; yet were it but a vain dream, if it be compared unto that everlasting life, which is prepared for Christ's elect and faithful followers. So that all flesh is as hay, and all his glory, like a flower of the hay, is withered, and the flower fallen, but God and his word endure for ever. Isaiah xl.

Therefore let not the wise man rejoice in his wisdom, neither the strong man in his strength, nor the rich man in his riches. But he that rejoiceth, let him rejoice in the Lord, to whom be all honour and praise without end. Amen.

Chapter I.

That all goodness cometh of God, and all evil of ourselves.

The philosophers, to whom God has inspired certain sparkles of truth, acknowledged that the chief point of wisdom and direction of a man's life, was TO KNOW HIMSELF; which sentence the scripture establisheth so clearly, that no man may dissent from the truth of the same. For Solomon saith, that The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Now, who can fear the Lord, but only he that knoweth himself, as the scripture teacheth him? For if I perceive not the imperfection of my nature, which is subject unto corruption and void of all stableness; if I perceive not the unstableness of my flesh, being prone to all sin, and rebellious to righteousness, and that there dwelleth no goodness in me; if I perceive not the poison of the old serpent and hell, and sin which lies hid within me, unto which pains intolerable are prepared; I shall have no occasion to fear God, but rather to advance myself equal with God, as Lucifer, Nebuchadnezzar, Herod, and such others have done, who afterwards were sore chastened for their folly.

What hast thou, vain man, whereof thou mayest rejoice? For the scripture testifies, that every good and perfect gift cometh from above, from the Father of light, with whom is no transmutation. So, that whether they be outward gifts or inward, pertaining either to the body or soul; if they be good, they come from above, from the

Father of light. For if thou behold the proportion of thy body, stature, or beauty, thou shalt easily perceive, that it cometh of God, even by the words of Christ; who exhorts us not to be careful; for there is none of us all, though we be ever so careful, that can add one cubit to his stature, either make one hair white or black.

And as touching our wisdom, eloquence, long life, victory, glory, and such others, the scripture testifies that they come of God and not of ourselves. For St. James saith, If any lack wisdom, let him ask it of God, which giveth it abundantly. As it is evident by Solomon, who desired wisdom of God to judge between good and evil. And the Lord made him answer, Because thou hast asked that thing, and not long life, nor riches, nor the destruction of thy enemies, but rather wisdom to discern in judgment; behold, I have given unto thee an heart full of wisdom and understanding, insomuch, that none before thee hath been like unto thee, neither yet after thee shall any be like unto thee. And besides that, I have given thee riches and glory.

Furthermore, the most glorious gifts concerning our souls, come from God, even of his mere mercy and favour, which he showeth us in Christ, and for Christ, as predestination, election, vocation, and justification: and albeit, M. More, with his painted poetry and crafty conveyance, casts a mist before your eyes, that you might wander out of the right way, endeavouring himself to instruct you, that God hath predestinated and chosen us before the beginning of the world because he knew before that we should do good works, yet will I set you a candle, which shall shine so bright, and so clearly dispel his mist and vain poetry, that you shall plainly perceive him dancing naked in a net, who, notwithstanding, thinketh himself to go invisible. And although there be scripture enough, both Tit. iii. and Rom. xi., to prove the same true, yet will I let that pass, and allege for me Augustine, which is the candle that I speak of, who shall disclose his juggling, and utter his ignorance: for Augustine saith, "Some man will affirm that God did choose us, because he saw before that we should do good works: but Christ saith not so, who saith, Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you; for if he had chosen us because he saw before that we should do good works, then should he also have seen before that we should first have chosen him, which is contrary

to the words of Christ, and the mind of the evangelist." Here may you see how evidently Augustine confuteth M. More's poetry, and openeth his serpentine deceit.

Finally, St. Paul saith, (Eph. ii.) that we are saved through grace, and that it cometh not of ourselves, it is the gift of God, and cometh not of works, lest any man should boast himself; which words M. More might be ashamed to hear, if he were not another Lucian, neither regarding God nor man. But Augustine addeth thus much more unto it, that it can in no wise be grace or favour, except it be always free. And therefore, I may conclude that it is neither of the works going before, nor of the works coming after, but only of the free favour of God.

And this are we sure of, that whomsoever he chooseth, them he saveth of his mercy: and whom he repelleth, them, of his secret and unsearchable judgment, he condemneth. But why he chooseth the one and repelleth the other, inquire not, saith Augustine, if thou wilt not err. Insomuch that St. Paul could not attain to the knowledge thereof, but cried out, Oh the depth of the riches and wisdom of the knowledge of God; how unsearchable are his judgments, and how incomprehensible are his ways! But M. More had rather loud to lie, and far to err, than to let God alone with his secrets, or to acknowledge his ignorance in any thing.

And to be short, St. Paul saith, What hast thou that thou hast not received? If thou hast received it, why dost thou advance thyself, as though thou hadst not received it? So, we may conclude, that all goodness cometh of God, and all sin or mischief of our own poisoned nature. Insomuch, that we may say with the prophet Daniel, O Lord, all glory be unto thee, and unto us shame and confusion, so that he that rejoiceth, may rejoice in the Lord.

Chapter II.

For what intent God giveth us these gifts, and that they are rather a charge and a careful burden, than any pleasure to rejoice at.

Like as there are many members of our body, and every member hath his office appointed unto him, which

he must do, not for his own wealth and safe-guard only, but for the preservation of the whole body; insomuch, that the most honest member must serve the vilest at his necessity, for if the hand would not serve the slow belly, they should both perish together; even so hath God appointed his gifts, and distributed them in this world unto us, which should be as one body, that every nation hath need of others, every occupation need of another, and every man need of his neighbour. This is so plain that it cannot be denied. Nevertheless, I will more specially touch the matter, because I would have it so rooted in you, that you might endeavour yourselves to fulfil it towards each other.

If God have opened the eyes of thy mind, and have given thee spiritual wisdom through the knowledge of his word, boast not thyself of it, but rather fear and tremble, for a chargeable office is committed unto thee, which, if thou fulfil it, is like to cost thee thy life at one time or other, with much trouble and persecution. But if thou fulfil it not, then shall that office be thy condemnation. For St. Paul saith, Wo is to me, if I preach not. And by the prophet Ezekiel, God saith, If I say unto the wicked that he shall die the death, and thou show him not of it, the wicked shall die in his iniquity, but I shall require his blood of thy hand.

But peradventure, our divines would expound these texts only upon them that are sent and have care of souls. Whereunto I answer, that every man who hath the light of God's word revealed unto him, is sent whensoever he seeth necessity, and hath care of his neighbour's soul. As by example; if God have given me my sight, and I perceive a blind man going in the way, who is ready, for lack of sight, to fall into a pit, wherein he were likely to perish, then am I bound by God's commandment to guide him till he were past that jeopardy, or else if he perish therein, where I might have delivered him, his blood shall be required of my hand. And likewise, if I perceive my neighbour like to perish for lack of Christ's doctrine, then am I bound to instruct him with the knowledge that God hath given me, or else his blood shall be required of my hand.

Peradventure, they will say, there is already one appointed to watch the pit, and therefore if any man fall into it, he shall make it good, and that therefore I am

discharged, and need to take no thought. Whereunto I answer, I would be glad that it were so. Notwithstanding, if I perceive that the watchman be asleep, or run to the alehouse to make good cheer, or gone out of the country on a lewd errand, and through his negligence espy my neighbour in danger of the pit, then am I nevertheless bound to lead him from it; I think that God hath sent me at that time to save that soul from perishing. And the law of God and nature binds me thereto, which charges me to love my neighbour as myself, and to do unto him as I would be done unto. And I think there is no man who is in this case, but he would have his neighbour to help him, and therefore is he bound to help his neighbour, if he be in like jeopardy. And even thus art thou bound to give good counsel to him that lacketh it, and to distribute whatsoever talent thou hast received of God, unto the profit of thy neighbour. Moreover, besides that ye cannot avoid this my solution, yet I desire you to note how the text itself, which I allege, condemns your vain objection—the words are these (Ezek. iii.); If I say unto the wicked that he shall die the death, and thou show him not of it, the wicked shall die in his iniquity, but I shall require his blood of thy hand. Mark, I pray you, that the prophet saith not, as you object, that he which should show the wicked his iniquity, and doth not so, shall perish only, and the wicked himself be saved, because his fault was not told him by him which took charge to teach him; but, contrariwise, the wicked shall perish in his iniquity, saith God by his prophet Ezekiel, and his blood shall be required of the hand of him who should have instructed him in the truth.

If God have given thee faith in Christ's blood, be not proud of it, but fear. For since God hath not spared the natural branches (I mean the Jews, who were his elect people); since he spared not the angels that sinned, but hath cast them into hell, to be reserved unto judgment; since he spared not the old world, but overwhelmed them with waters, delivering Noah, the preacher of righteousness, take heed, lest he also spare not thee. Truth it is, that where faith is present, no sin can be imputed, but this faith is not in thy power, for it is the gift of God. And therefore, if thou be unkind, and endeavour not thyself to walk innocently, and to bring forth the fruits of faith, it is to be feared that for thine unkindness, God will

take it from thee, and hire out his vineyard to another, who shall restore the fruit in due season, and then shall thine end be worse than thy beginning. Let us therefore with fear and trembling seek our health, and make stable our vocation and election, mortifying our members and man of sin, by exercising ourselves in Christ's precepts, that we may be the children of our Father that is in heaven, and fellow-heirs with our Saviour and brother, Christ Jesus.

If God hath given thee riches, thou mayest not think that he has committed them unto thee for thine own use only; but that he has made thee a steward over them, to distribute them to the profit of the commonalty. For indeed thou art not the very owner of them, but God is the owner, who saith by the prophet Haggai, Gold is mine, and silver is mine: and he hath committed them for a season to thine hand, to see whether thou wilt be faithful in distributing this wicked mammon, according to his commandments. And that it is so, thou mayest well note by the parable of the Rich Man, who was clothed in silk, and fared delicately in this world, and afterwards was burned in hell. Whereupon Gregory notes, that he was not damned because he despoiled any other man's goods, but because he did not distribute his own, as the process of the text also well declares. Wherefore, if we must give account of all that is given us, then have we little cause to glory, but rather to fear and tremble, and to count him most happy to whom least is committed. For God, to whom this account must be made, cannot be deluded, although the world may be blinded.

If God have given thee thy perfect limbs and members, then get to some occupation, and work with thine own hands, that thy members, which are whole and perfect, may minister to their necessity, that lack their members; for that is acceptable in the sight of God; and the contrary so detestable, that if thou withdraw thy members from aiding thy neighbours, thou shalt of God be counted for a thief and a murderer. And therefore I affirm that all our holy hypocrites and idle-bellied monks, canons, and priests, whether they are regular or secular, if they labour not to preach God's word, are thieves and also murderers; for they maintain their strong members in idleness, which ought to labour for the profit of their neighbours, that their perfect members might minister unto the necessity

of them that lack their members. As the eye must minister her fruit of sight unto the feet, hands, and other members which lack it, or else are they in jeopardy to perish at every pit, and the eye is guilty of their destruction for withdrawing her office from them. And this may we establish by the words of St. Paul, who saith, He that did steal, let him steal no more, but rather labour with his own hands that he may have to distribute to them that lack. And some doctors do very well expound it of certain persons that walked inordinately, and would not work themselves, though they were sturdy lubbers, but lived on other men's charity, which the apostle calls theft, and exhorts them to work with their own hands, that they may both help themselves and others.

And because some persons who feel themselves grieved, because they are guilty, will not be content to allow this exposition, I will allege another saying of the wise man, which shall not only allow this sentence, but also bite them better: for he saith, "The bread of the needy is the life of the poor, and he that defraudeth him of it, is a murderer." This saying holds their noses so hard to the grindstone, that it wholly disfigures their faces, for it proves our bishops, abbots, and spiritual possessionaries to be double thieves and murderers, as concerning the body, besides their murdering of the soul, for lack of God's word, which they will neither preach, nor suffer any to do it purely, but persecute and put them unto the most cruel death. First, they are thieves and murderers, because they distribute not that which was appointed by our faithful forefathers to the intent it should have been ministered unto the poor, (for then they seemed to be very virtuous,) but now they bestow it upon hawks, hounds, horses, &c. upon gorgeous apparel and delicate fare. And glad are the poor, when they may get the scraps. They may have not so much as a pig of their own sow, no, scarce a feather of their own goose. For he that may dispend four or five thousand marks a year, would think it were too much if he gave twenty nobles of it unto the poor, which, notwithstanding, are the owners, under God, of all together, the minister's living deducted, who, as the apostle saith, having their food and clothes to cover them, ought therewith to be content. And thus they defraud the poor of their bread, and so are they thieves; and, because this bread is their life, as the aforesaid text testifies,

he that defraudeth him of it, is not only a thief, but also a murderer.*

And when they think to bestow it very well, and bestow it in building palaces of pleasure, yet are they therein much to be reproved. For, as an old doctor saith, they are in that point worse than the devil, for the devil would have had that Christ should have turned stones into bread, which might have succoured the poor, and these builders turn the bread into stones. For they bestow the goods which should be given to the poor for their sustenance, upon a heap of stones.

But here they will object, as they are never without evasions, that if they should distribute it among the poor, according as they are bound, within a while all would be spent, and no good should come of it, nor any man know where it is become, or who fares the better for it. Whereunto I answer, that indeed ye are too wise for me, for since ye go about to correct Christ, and to fetch him to school and teach him what is best, it were but folly for me to meddle with you. For Christ's mind and commandment is, that we should distribute it and not withhold it from them. And he saith by his prophet, Wo be to them that couple and knit houses together; which I think may justly be verified upon you. Nevertheless, this I dare say, that if a bishop, who may expend four thousand marks, would distribute every year but the one half unto the poor of his diocese, giving unto one man forty shillings, and lending to another twenty nobles to set up his occupation withal, and so give and lend as he seeth need, he should within five or six years make a flourishing diocese. And I think verily that his face should more be allowed before God, than if he had built a thousand abbeys; for God's commandment ought first to be done, and is much more acceptable to him than all the works that proceed of our imaginations and foolish fantasies.

Besides that, they are thieves and murderers for withdrawing their perfect members from labour, whereby they might minister unto their neighbour's necessity. I speak of as many as are not occupied about preaching God's word, for in that they withdraw their members from succouring their poor neighbours, they are thieves. And

* The reader will remember that this was written *before* the Reformation.

because this succour is called their life, they are murderers for keeping it from them.

Here our begging orders of friars would think to be exempt, because they have not received rents to be distributed. Notwithstanding, if we ponder this text well, we shall find them condemned as deep as the others. For, they enter into every man's house, and with unshamefaced begging poll them so nigh, that in a manner they leave nothing behind for the really poor who are sick, lame, cripple, blind, and maimed. For there is not the poorest desolate widow, but with their fair flattering they will so deceive her, that they will be sure either of money or ware: but, dear brethren, maintain ye no such murderers, lest ye be partakers of their sins, but rather follow the counsel of the apostle, who charges us in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that we withdraw ourselves from every brother that walketh inordinately and worketh not, and biddeth if he will not work he should not eat.

Now, they object, that they live in contemplation and study of scripture, and say that they ought not to be hindered from that holy work; for Christ said, that Mary had chosen the best part, which should not be taken from her. Whereunto may I make the same answer, which that holy father and abbot Silvane made. This Silvane was an abbot, a holy man, having many monks under him, whom he caused after their prayers, which were nothing so long as our monks use now-a-days, who think for their many words to be heard, like as did the pharisees whom Christ rebuked; he caused them, I say, to labour for their living, according to the mind of Paul. And upon a time there came a religious man to his abbey, and when he saw his monks working, he asked the abbot why he so used them, and why they gave not themselves to holy contemplation, seeing that Mary had chosen the best part. The abbot made few words, but gave this monk a book, and sent him into a cell, to be there occupied in study and contemplation. And at dinner-time the abbot called all his monks to meat, and let him sit in contemplation. After noon, when he began to wax very hungry, he came out again to the abbot Silvane, and asked whether his monks had not yet dined: and he answered, Yes.—And why called you not me, asked the monk, to dine with them?—Verily, said the abbot, I thought you had been all spiritual, and had

needed no meat.—Nay, quoth the monk, I am not so spiritual nor fervent in contemplation, but that I must needs eat.—Verily, said the abbot, then must you also needs work, for Mary hath need of Martha. When the monk heard that, he repented and fell to work as the others did. And I would to God that this answer would cause our religious even so to do, and to fall to work, that they might succour their needy neighbours.

And as touching their study in scripture, Augustine saith, How shalt thou better learn to understand the scripture, than by going about to fulfil that which thou readest there? And if thou go about to fulfil it, saith he, then must thou work with thy hands, for that doth St. Paul teach thee. Of this I have compiled a whole book, which, if God have appointed me to finish it, and set it forth, shall be a rule of more perfection unto our religious, than any that they have used this hundred years.

Chapter III.

The conclusion of this treatise; that no flesh should rejoice, but fear and tremble, in all the gifts that he receives.

Here mayest thou perceive that no man liveth, but he may fear and tremble, and he most may fear to whom most is committed, for of him shall much be required; and much are we bound to thank God in all things. For, of ourselves have we nought but sin and vanity, but through his gracious favour have we all goodness, and are that we are. And since all our goodness cometh of him, we must again be thankful unto him, and keep his commandments. For else we may fear, lest he take his gifts from us, and then shall we receive the greater condemnation.

If thou hast received the knowledge of his word, give him thanks, and be a faithful minister thereof; for else he shall deliver thee unto thine own fantastical imaginations, and cast thee headlong into a heap of heresies, which shall bring thee unto utter destruction.

If he give thee faith in his word, give him thanks, and bring forth the fruits thereof in due season; for else he will

take it away from thee, and send thee into final desperation.

If he give thee riches, then give him thanks, and distribute them according to God's commandment; or else he shall take them from thee, if he love thee, either by thieves, by water, by death of thy cattle, by blasting thy fruits, or such other scourges, to cause thee to love him, because he would alienate thine heart from them; this, I say, he will do, if he love thee, to make thee put thine whole trust in him, and not in these transitory things. But if he hate thee, then will he send thee great prosperity, and increase them plenteously, and give thee thy heaven in this world, unto thine everlasting damnation in the life to come; and therefore fear and take good heed while thou hast leisure.

If thou ask me, what his honour, praise, and thanks are? I answer, that his honour, praise, and thanks, are nothing else but the fulfilling of his commandments. If thou ask me, what his commandments are, as touching the bestowing of thy goods? I answer, his commandments are, that thou bestow them in the works of mercy, and that shall he lay to thy charge at the day of judgment. He shall ask you, whether you have fed the hungry, and given drink to the thirsty, and not whether you have builded abbeys and chauntries. He shall ask you, whether you have harboured the harbourless, and clothed the naked, and not whether you have gilded images, or given copes to churches. He shall ask you, whether you have visited the sick, and gone to the prisoners, and not whether you have gone a pilgrimage to Walsingham or Canterbury. And this I affirm unto thee, that if thou build a thousand cloisters, and give as many copes and chalices to churches, and visitest all the pilgrimages in the world, and espiest and seest a poor man, whom thou mightest help, perishing for lack of one groat; all these things whereon thou hast bestowed so much money, shall not be able to help thee. Therefore take good heed, and say not but that ye are warned.

If God have given thee thy perfect limbs and members, then give him thanks, and use them to the taming of thy body, and the profit of thy neighbour. For else, if God love thee, he will send thee some maim or mischief, and take them from thee, that thy negligence and not using of them be not so extremely imputed unto thee. But if he hate thee, he shall keep them whole and sound for

thee, that the not using of them be thy greater damnation. Therefore, beware and fear, giving him thanks according to his commandments. For we are his creatures, and are much bound to him, that he hath given to us our perfect members; for it is better for us to have our limbs and to work with them, distributing to others, than that others should distribute unto us: for it is a more holy thing to give than to take; yea, we are much bound unto him, although he have made us imperfect and mutilated: for we were in his hands, as we are yet, to have done with us whatsoever had pleased him, even to have made us the vilest creatures upon the earth.

I have read of a shepherd, who, keeping his sheep in the field, espied a foul toad, and when he had well marked her, and compared her shape and nature unto himself and his nature, he fell a weeping, and cried out piteously. At the last came a bishop by, riding right royally; and when he saw the shepherd so sorely lamenting, he reined his horse, and asked him the cause of his great wailing. Then answered the shepherd, "Verily, sir, I weep for mine unkindness towards almighty God: for I have given thanks to God for many things, but yet I was never so kind since I was born, as to thank him of this thing."—"What is that?" said the bishop. "Sir," said he, "see you not this foul toad?"—"Yes," said the bishop, "what is that to the purpose?"—"Verily," said the shepherd, "it is the creature of God as well as I am, and God might have made me even such a foul and unreasonable beast as this is, if it had pleased him, and yet he hath not done so, but of his mercy and goodness he hath made me a reasonable creature, after his own likeness; and yet was I never so kind as to thank him that he had not made me so vile a creature; which thing I greatly bewail, and mine unkindness causes me now thus to weep." With that the bishop departed, and I trust learned to do thereafter. And I beseech God that we may so do, and be the faithful followers of our Saviour Christ Jesus, to whom be praise, honour, and glory, for ever. Amen.

EXTRACTS

FROM THE

BOOK OF PURGATORY

WRITTEN

BY JOHN FRITH,

AGAINST M. RASTALL, SIR THOMAS MORE, AND BISHOP FISHER.

IN the prologue Frith states, "There was a brother of ours named Simon Fish, (who now I trust resteth in God's hands,) whose eyes God had opened, not only to espy the wily walking of hypocrites, and the ruin of the realm, which through their means was nigh at hand; but also to mark and ponder the peril of men's souls, and how that the ignorant people by their seduction, were fallen into that frantic imagination, that they more feared the pope and his decrees, which are but vanity, than God himself and his law, which are most righteous and eternal. This man therefore, of a fervent and burning zeal that he bare to the welfare of the commonalty, broke out and touched these hypocrites in a little treatise, which he called, "The Supplication of Beggars;" willing that we should give the abundance of our riches unto the poor, to whom it is due by the law of God; and that we should no longer suffer ourselves to be despoiled and robbed by a sight of sturdy lubbers, who, under a false cloak of virtue and prayer, deceive the poor of their living, and both the poor and the rich of their souls' health, if credence be given unto them. And where these wily foxes would have made a cloak of purgatory, affirming it (the riches) were due unto them because they pray for their friends' souls that they may come to rest, he answered unto that point, preventing their objection, and proved that either there could be no such purgatory—or else that the pope were a merciless tyrant, who, as he saith himself, may deliver souls from thence, but will not except he have money."*

* See Note, p. 59, for farther particulars respecting this tract.

Frith farther states, that sir Thomas More had taken upon him to answer that tract, and had been followed in his arguments by Rastall, "a printer dwelling at Paul's-gate in London," a relative of More's; he therefore sought to expose their errors, hoping that such as had been deceived thereby, might be brought into the right way.

Frith then proceeds to examine their arguments, and also those of Fisher, bishop of Rochester, one of the most learned of the Romish ecclesiastics, upon the same subject. The whole work would be tedious to the general reader, and irrelevant to the design of these selections, although it should be read by all persons who desire to become fully acquainted with the history of the English Reformation. A few extracts are here given, chiefly referring to subjects of importance which demand attention at the present time, as they did in the days of our forefathers. In fact the false doctrine of the church of Rome respecting purgatory, involves many other errors most mischievous and hurtful.*

On Purgatory.

I have said that sinners shall enter into heaven, and never come into purgatory. Here peradventure you are desirous to know how God's justice is pacified. For all sin by the justice of God must needs be punished. Now can the world espy no punishment here, and therefore they thought it necessary to imagine a purgatory to purge and punish sin. Here answer I with Saint Paul; (Heb. i.) Christ the Son of God, being the brightness of his glory, and very image of his substance, bearing up all things with the word of his power, hath in his own person purged our sins, and is set on the right hand of God. Behold the

* Rastall was educated at Oxford, probably for the law. Afterwards he became a printer in London, which business was then esteemed a suitable profession for any scholar, or person of ability. Being noted for his learning and religion, he became intimate with sir Thomas More, whose sister he married. He was a zealous supporter of popery, and an opposer of the Reformation. Fox says, that Frith in this controversy withstood Rochester, More, and Rastall, whereof the one by the help of the doctors, the other by wresting of the scripture, and the third by the help of natural philosophy, had conspired against him. But he, as a Hercules, fighting not against two only, but even with them all three at once, did so overthrow and confound them, that he converted Rastall to his part.

true purgatory and consuming fire, which hath fully burnt up and consumed our sins, and hath for ever pacified the Father's wrath towards us. Mark how he saith that Christ in his own person hath purged our sins. If thou yet seek another purgation, then art thou injurious unto the blood of Christ. For if thou thoughtest his blood sufficient, then thou wouldest seek no other purgatory, but give him all the thanks and all the praise of thy whole health and salvation, and rejoice wholly in the Lord. Paul writeth (Eph. v.) on this manner, Christ loved the congregation. And what did he for it? sent he it into purgatory there to be cleansed? Nay, verily, but gave himself for it, that he might sanctify it and cleanse it in the fountain of water, through the word, to make it unto himself a glorious congregation, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blame. Now, if Christ by these means have sanctified it, and made it without spot, wrinkle, and blame, then were it against all right to cast it into purgatory. Wherefore I must needs conclude that either Paul saith not true who affirms that Christ hath so purged his congregation, or else that Christ is unrighteous if he cast them into purgatory, who are without spot, wrinkle, or blame, in his sight.

Christ chose us in him before the beginning of the world, that we might be holy and without spot in his sight. (Eph. i.) If through his choosing and election we are without spot in his sight, alas, what blind unthankfulness is it to suppose that he will yet have us tormented in purgatory. Peradventure every man perceives not what this meaneth, that we are righteous in his sight, seeing that every man is a sinner; (1 John i.) therefore I will briefly declare the meaning of the apostle. This is first a clear case, that there lives no man upon earth without sin. Notwithstanding, all they that were chosen in Christ before the foundations of the world were laid, are without spot of sin in the sight of God; (Eph. i.) so that they are both sinners and righteous. If we consider the imperfection of our faith and charity; if we consider the conflict of the flesh and the spirit; (Gal. v.) if we consider our rebellious members, which are sold under sin, (Rom. vii.) then are we grievous sinners. And contrariwise, if we believe that of merciful favour God gave his most dear Son to redeem us from our sin; if we believe that he imputes not our sins unto us, but that his wrath is pacified in

Christ and his blood; if we believe that he hath freely given us his Christ, and with him all things, so that we are destitute in no gift, (Rom. viii.) then are we righteous in his sight, and our conscience at peace with God, not through ourselves, but through our Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom. v.) So mayest thou perceive that thou art a sinner in thyself, and yet art thou righteous in Christ, for through him thy sin is not imputed nor reckoned unto thee. And so they to whom God imputeth not their sins, are blessed, righteous, without spot, wrinkle, or blame. (Rom. iv. Psal. xxxii.) And therefore he never will thrust them into purgatory. Paul saith, There is no difference, for all have sinned, and lack the glory which before God is allowed, but they are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. (Rom. iii.) What say you now? Shall they yet go into purgatory? Call ye that justification freely by his grace, to lie in the pains of purgatory? Surely that were a new kind of speech, which I think Paul never understood.

Peradventure some men will think mine arguments to be of small pith,* and will try to dissolve them by a distinction, saying, It is truth that God hath so purged and cleansed us from all our iniquities; nevertheless his mercy, purging, and forgiveness, have only purified us from the fault and crime, but not from the pain which is due to the crime. To this objection I answer, that if God of his mercy, and through the blood of his Son Jesus, has not remitted the pain due unto that crime, then shall we all be damned; for the pain due unto every disobedience that is against God, is eternal damnation. Therefore if this pain were not forgiven us, we are still under condemnation, and so Christ's blood were shed in vain, and could save no man.

If they will say that this everlasting pain is not wholly forgiven us, but that it is altered into the temporal pain of purgatory, out of which the pope may deliver them by his pardon,—for else have they no evasion at all,—then may we soon confute them, and that by divers reasons. First, that their words are nothing but their own imagination, for they cannot confirm their sayings by the scriptures, neither ought we to accept anything as an article of our faith which is not approved by God's word; for we may neither decline unto the right hand nor unto the left, but only do that which the Lord commandeth us. (Deut. iv. v. xii. xiii.)

* Force.

And again, if a man should ask them by what authority the pope gives such pardon; they answer, that it is out of the merits of Christ's passion. And so at the last they are compelled to grant, even against themselves, that Christ hath not only deserved for us the forgiveness of the crime, but also of the pain. If Christ have deserved all for us, who gives the pope authority to reserve a part of his deservings from me, and to sell me Christ's merits for money?* Besides, every christian man ought to apply unto God in all things which should employ his honour, as far as the scripture will suffer. Now seeing it is more unto the honour of God that he should deliver us in his blood, both from the crime and from the pain, and that also it is not repugnant unto the scripture, but that he hath released us from the pain as well as from the sin; for what intent should we be so unkind, as to despoil him of this great honour, and without any authority of scripture, imagine that he hath not delivered us from the pain as well as from the sin? Moreover, if he should reserve the pain, then were it no full remission and forgiveness, but what blasphemy is it to think that Christ's blood was not sufficient to give full remission unto his faithful! Furthermore, For what intent should the pain be reserved? To satisfy towards God for their offences? Nay verily, for all

* More, speaking in the name of souls in purgatory, says, "Finally if ye pity any man in pain, ye never knew pain comparable to ours, whose fire surpasses in heat all fires that ever burned upon earth, as far as the hottest of all those passes a fire painted upon a wall."

Frith observes, "Verily among all his (sir Thomas More's) poetry it is reasonable we should grant him this; yea, and that our fire is but water in comparison to it, for I assure you, it alone hath melted more gold and silver for the profit of our spiritualty, out of poor men's purses, than all the goldsmith's fires within England, neither yet can the heat of it be assuaged, but it melteth castles, hard stones, lands and tenements innumerable. For all your sects of religion, monks, friars, canons, and nuns, with other priests, regular and secular, by this fire, multiplication, and alchemy, have obtained their whole riches and pleasures, even the sweat (labour) of England. And so must we grant him that this fire is very hot. Now may you well perceive what a slender foundation their hot purgatory hath; for by this confutation you may easily see that it hath no ground or authority of scripture. Notwithstanding, it is the foundation of all religions and cloisters, yea and of all the goods that now are in these spiritualties. Are not they skilful workmen that can build so much on so slender a foundation? Howbeit they have made it so top heavy that it is surely likely to have a fall!" p. 50.

Frith's anticipation was shortly after realized by the suppression of the monasteries and abbeys, which had owed their origin almost entirely to the gainful doctrine of purgatory!

men living are not able to satisfy towards God for one sin. Neither are all the pains of hell able to purge one sin or satisfy for it, for then at the length the damned souls should be delivered out of hell.

Finally, I think that there was never any temporal punishment instituted of God to be any satisfaction for sin, but the use of all temporal pains, and the chief cause why they were ordained is this;—temporal pains are profitable for the commonwealth, that they may be examples to teach the unfaithful, who else fear not God, that they may, at the least for fear of punishment, abstain from committing like offences; for if their sin were unpunished, then should all vice reign to the utter subversion of the commonwealth. They are also profitable for the faithful, for they try and purify the faith of God's elect, and subdue and mortify their carnal members, that they may be the more able to serve their brethren, and to withstand the vehement assaults of temptation which are ever at hand, and lest they should wax proud and boast themselves for those gifts which they have received of God. Furthermore they set out and advance the glory of God. For after we are put in remembrance and made to feel our frail nature that so continually displeases God our Father, we have occasion to ponder and compare the transitory pain which we here suffer, with those enormous trespasses that we have committed, and so to espy the infinite mercy and favour of God, and even in our adversities compelled to praise God, our merciful and tender Father, who scourgeth us so favourably for those grievous offences that have deserved a thousand times more punishment. Howbeit, to say truth, there is no man that can take any such profit of them that men feign to be punished in purgatory. For we neither see it nor hear it, neither have we any mention made of it in scripture, that we may be sure that it is so. Now since we have no infallible evidence, but only fantastical imaginations, it is plain enough that there was no such thing ordained, neither to advance God's honour, nor yet to the profit of the commonalty, or else of God's elect, for then I am sure that Christ, and all his apostles, would not have forgotten to have remembered us of it.

On Good Works.

Paul saith that there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. (Rom. viii.) If we continue firm and stable in Christ unto the end, we shall be saved. (Matt. xxiv.) What need then is there of purgatory, yea and what should purgatory do? Is Christ not sufficient—then our faith is in vain. And if he be sufficient, then purgatory is in vain.

Paul saith, If you be justified by the law, then is Christ dead in vain. Now if the law, being good, just, and holy, (Rom. vii.) and even of God's own making, cannot justify us, thinkest thou to be justified by frying in purgatory?

They that are the chief patrons and advocates of purgatory, feign it to be for no other intent, but to purge evil works, and to be as a penance to supply the good works, which we lacked being in this world. But all this can not bring us into heaven. For then were Christ dead in vain.

Peradventure, thou wilt say unto me, Shall I do no good works? I answer, Yes. Thou wilt ask me, Wherefore? I answer, Thou must do them, because God hath commanded them. Thou wilt say, For what intent hath he commanded them? I answer, Because thou art living in this world, and must needs have conversation with men; therefore hath God appointed thee what thou shalt do to the profit of thy neighbour, and taming of thy flesh. As Paul testifies; (Eph. ii.) We are his work, made in Christ Jesus to good works, which works God hath prepared, that we should walk in them. These works God would have us do, that the unfaithful may see the godly and virtuous conversation of his faithful, and thereby be compelled to glorify our Father which is in heaven. (Mat. v.) And so are they both profitable for thy neighbour, and also a testimony unto thee, by which men may know that thou art the right son of thy heavenly Father, and a very Christ unto thy neighbour; and even as our heavenly Father gave his Christ unto us, not for any profit that he should have thereby, but only for our profit; likewise, thou shouldest do all thy good works, not having respect what commodities thou shalt have of them, but ever attending through charity, to the wealth and profit of thy neighbour. Thou wilt yet object; Then see I no great profit that I shall have by them: I answer, What wouldest thou have? First, Christ is given thee freely, and with

him hast thou all things. He is thy wisdom, righteousness, hallowing, and redemption; (1 Cor. i.) by him art thou made inheritor of God, and fellow-heir with Christ. (Rom. viii.) This is freely given thee with Christ, before thou wast born, through the favour and election of God, which election was done before the foundations of the world were cast. (Eph. i.) Now wert thou very foolish and unkind, if thou thoughtest to purchase by thy works the thing which is already given thee. Therefore thou must do thy works with a single eye, having neither respect unto the joys of heaven, neither yet to the pains of hell, but only do them for the profit of thy neighbour, as God commandeth thee, and let him alone with the residue.

To this well agrees Paul, (Eph. ii.) saying; By grace are ye made safe through faith, and that cometh not of yourselves, but it is the gift of God and cometh not of works, lest any man should boast himself. Lo! here Paul saith plainly, that our salvation is the gift of God and cometh not of works; if it come not of works, then are we worse than mad to feign a purgatory. For the chief operation of that should be but to supply the works which we have not accomplished, being in this body.

Paul saith, (Rom. xi.) The remnant which are left at this time, are through the election of grace. If it be through grace, then is it not by works, for then grace were no grace. Or if it be for the works' sake, so is it not of favour and grace, according to that which he wrote before. (Rom. iv.) If Abraham, saith Paul, were justified by his works, then may he rejoice, but not before God. But what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and that was imputed unto him for righteousness, for he that worketh, receiveth his reward, not of favour, but of duty. Now if it be duty, then needeth he not to thank God, but rather himself, for then God giveth him nothing but that which is his own, of duty. Where is then the praise and glory that we owe to God? Therefore it followeth in the same text, Unto him that worketh not, but believeth in Him that justifieth the wicked, is his faith imputed for righteousness. Now if our salvation come of faith, and not through our works and deserts, then is purgatory shut out of door and quite vanishes away.

Christ saith, So hath God loved the world, that he would give his only Son, that all which believe in him, should not perish; but that they should have everlasting

life. (John iii.) Then what needeth purgatory? Thou wilt, peradventure, say, It is true, they shall have everlasting life; but they must first go through purgatory. I answer, Nay, verily. But Christ affirms, and that with an oath, That he which heareth his word, and believeth his Father which sent him, hath everlasting life. Yea, and that he is gone already from death unto life. (John v.) Wilt thou now say, that he shall go into purgatory? Forsooth, if that were true, and the fire also so hot, as our prelates affirm, then went he not from death unto life, but rather from a small death unto a greater death. The prophet saith, Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. (Psal. cxvi.) And St. John saith, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord: (Rev. xiv.) but surely, if they should go into the painful purgatory, there to be tormented of fiends, then were they not blessed, but rather wretched.

God saith by Moses, (Exod. xxxiii.) I will shew mercy to whom I shew mercy; and will have compassion on whom I have compassion. Now, if our salvation be of mercy and compassion, then can there be no such purgatory. For the nature of mercy is to forgive, but purgatory will have all paid and satisfied; so that they twain are desperate and can in no wise agree. And look how many texts in scripture commend God's mercy, even so many deny this painful purgatory. The prophet saith, He hath not dealt with us after our sins, neither hath rewarded us according to our iniquities: but look, how high the heavens are above the earth, even so high hath he made his mercy to prevail over them that worship him. And look, how far the east is from the west, even so far hath he set our sins from us. (Psal. ciii.) And before, in the same psalm, the prophet exhorts his soul to praise the Lord, saying, Praise the Lord, O my soul, which forgiveth thee all thine iniquities, and healeth all thy diseases. Now, if this be true that he ordereth us not according to our sins, but poureth his mercy so plenteously upon us; if also he forgive us all our iniquities, why should there be any such purgatory, to purge and torment the simple souls, and especially since all was forgiven them before?

Wilt thou not call him a shrewd creditor, who, after he hath freely forgiven his debtor, will yet cast him into prison for the same debt? I think every man would say on this manner, It was in his own pleasure, whether he would

forgive it or not; and then of favour and compassion he forgave it. But now that he hath forgiven it, he doth unrighteously to punish his debtor for it. And albeit man repent his forgiving, and afterwards sue for his debt, yet God can never repent himself of his merciful gifts; (Rom. xi.) and therefore will he never torment us for our trespasses, no, nor yet once remember them. Ezek. xviii. Heb. x.

Since God forgives the greater offences, why shall he not also forgive the less? He forgave freely much greater offences unto the publican, who acknowledged himself to be a sinner, (Luke xviii.) than those are, for which men feign that we must be tormented in purgatory. For there is no soul, as they grant themselves, that suffers in purgatory for great crimes and mortal sins. But only for little petty peccadulias, that is, small faults, and for venial sins. He forgave much greater enormities unto the thief, to whom he said, This day shalt thou be with me, not in purgatory, but in paradise; (Luke xxiii.) he forgave much greater to Mary Magdalen. (Luke vii.) Is his hand now shortened? Is not his power as great as it was? Is he not as merciful as ever he was? Why leave we the cistern of living water, and dig us pits of our own, which can hold no pure water? (Jer. ii.) Why forsake we Christ, who hath wholly purged us, and seek another purgatory of our own imagination? If thou believe that Christ's blood is sufficient to purge thy sin, why seekest thou another purgatory?

St. Paul saith, I desire to be loosed from this body, and to be with Christ. (Phil. i.) Verily, if he had thought to have gone through purgatory, he would not have been so hasty. For there should he have had a hot broth and a heartless, and so might he rather have desired long to have lived. And therefore, I suppose, that he knew nothing of purgatory, but that he rather thought, as the truth is, that death should finish all his evils and sorrows, and give him rest in loosing him from his rebellious members, which were sold and captive under sin.

All christian men should desire death, as Paul doth, (Phil. i.) not because of their cross and trouble, which they suffer in this present world, for then they sought themselves and their own profit, and not the glory of God. But if we will well desire death, we must first consider, how sorely sin displeases God our Father, and then our own nature and frailty, and our members so bound

under sin, that we cannot do nor yet think a good thought of ourselves. (2 Cor. iii.) Then shall we find occasion to lament our life, not for the troubles that we suffer in it, but because we are so prone unto sin, and so continually displease God our Father. What desires he that would long live, but daily to heap sin upon sin? And therefore should we have a will to die, because that in death our sin is finished, and then shall we no more displease God our Father. Now, if we should feign a purgatory, it were not possible to imagine a greater obstacle to make us fear and fly from death. For since every man must acknowledge himself a sinner, (1 John i.) if he did not believe that Christ's death were sufficient, but that he must also go to purgatory, who could depart this world with a quiet mind?

The wise man saith, The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God. They seemed to die in the eyes of the foolish, and their end was thought to be pain and affliction; but they are in peace. There is no man but he must needs grant me, that every faithful is righteous in the sight of God, as it is written, (Hab. ii.) The righteous man liveth by his faith, and, (Rom. v.) Because we are justified by faith, we are at peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, &c. When these faithful or righteous depart, then saith the wise man, that they are fools which think them to be in pain or affliction: for it affirms, that they are in peace. Now, since their purgatory, which they imagine, is pain and affliction, and yet they feign that the righteous only shall enter into it after their death, then are they fools who suppose there is a purgatory, or else this text cannot be true.

Of the Efficacy of the Death of Christ.

Mine opinion of Christ's death is this:

1. We have all sinned in Adam without our own consent and work. And we are loosed from sin through Christ without our works or deservings.

2. Sin is come into the world through Adam, and is punished with death. The death through Christ is turned into a medicine, and wholly finishes sin.

3. One man's sin, which is Adam, has condemned many men.—One man's grace, which is Christ, has vanquished sin, and helped many.

4. If one man's sin be able to condemn us, without our

works—then much more is God's grace of power to save us, without our works.

5. Sin, through Adam, was planted in us.—Grace, through Christ, is planted in us.

6. Sin hath had dominion over all men, through Adam. —Grace prevaileth over us, through Christ.

7. Death, through sin, is planted in us.—Life, through grace, is planted in us.

8. Death, through sin, hath dominion over us.—Life, through grace, prevaileth over us.

9. Sin and death have condemned all men.—Grace and life have saved all men.

10. Through Adam, Adam's sin was counted our own. —Through Christ, Christ's righteousness is reputed unto us for our own.

Of this you may perceive, that we think that Christ's death profits us, for we take his death and resurrection for our whole redemption and salvation. Now, as concerning men's good deeds and prayers, I say, that they profit our neighbours: yea, and good works were ordained for that intent, that I should profit my neighbour through them: and prayer ought to be made to God for every state. But if I should grant that such works and prayers should help them that are departed, then should I speak wholly without my book, for the word of God knoweth no such thing. Let them, therefore, that pray for the dead, examine themselves well with what faith they do it, for faith leaneth only on the word of God, so that where his word is not, there can be no good faith; and if their prayer proceed not of faith, surely it cannot please God. Heb. xi.

On Persecution.

His lordship (the bishop of Rochester,) waxeth somewhat hot against Martin Luther, because he would that no man should be compelled to believe purgatory. For my lord saith, that it is profitable and well done to compel men to believe such things, whether they will or will not. And to establish his opinion, he plucketh out a word of the parable of Luke xiv., that a certain man made a great supper, and said to his servants, Go forth quickly into the ways and *compel* them to enter in. Verily there Christ meant no other thing, but that his apostles should go forth into all the world, and preach his words unto all nations,

opening unto them the miserable state and condition that they are in, and again, what mercy God hath showed them in his Son Christ. This would Christ that his apostles should expound and lay out so evidently by reasons, scriptures, and miracles unto the Gentiles, that they should even by their manifest persuasions be compelled to grant unto them that he was Christ, and to take upon them the faith that is in Christ. On this manner did Christ compel the sadducees to grant the resurrection ; (Matt. xxii.) and by these means he compelled the pharisees to grant in their consciences that he did his miracles with the power of God ; and yet afterward of very hate, knowing in their hearts the contrary, they said that he did them by the power of the devil. (Matt. xii.) But to say that Christ would have his disciples compel men with imprisonment, fetters, scourging, sword, and fire, is very false and far from the mildness of a christian spirit, although my lord approve it ever so much. For Christ did forbid his disciples such tyranny, yea, and rebuked them because they would have desired that fire should descend from heaven to consume the Samaritans who would not receive Christ. (Luke ix.) But he commanded them that if men would not receive their doctrine, they should depart from thence and sprinkle off the dust of their feet, to be a testimony against the unfaithful that they had been there, and had preached unto them the word of life. But God will have no man compelled unto his law with violence. Paul also testifies (2 Cor. i.) that he had not rule over the Corinthians, as touching their faith. By our faith we stand in the Lord, and by our infidelity we fall from him. As no man can search the heart, but only God, so can no man judge or order our faith, but only God through his Holy Spirit.

Furthermore, Faith is a gift of God, which he distributeth at his own pleasure. (1 Cor. xii.) If he give it not this day, he may give it to-morrow. And if thou perceive by any exterior work that thy neighbour have it not, instruct him with God's word, and pray God to give him grace to believe. That is rather a point of a christian man, than to compel a man by death, or exterior violence.

Finally, What doth thy compulsion and violence? Verily, nothing but make a stark hypocrite ; for no man can compel the heart to believe a thing except it see evidence and sufficient proof. I have heard tell of a boy who was present at his father's burning for his belief, and as soon

as the officers had espied the boy, they said each to other, Let us take him and examine him also, peradventure we shall find him as great a heretic as his father. When the boy saw that his father was dead, and that the catchpoles began to snatch at him, he was sore dismayed, and thought that he should die too. And when one of them apposed him, asking him how he believed, he answered, Master, I believe even as it pleaseth you. Even so by torments and crafty handling, a man may be compelled to say that he believeth the thing which he neither thinketh, nor yet can believe, for a man's faith is not in his own power.

But how doth God accept this—to say that I believe that which indeed I believe not? Verily, he utterly condemns it, whether the opinion be true or false. For if the opinion be true, as by example, that the faith in Christ's blood justifieth me before God; and I confess it before all the bishops in England with my mouth, and believe it not with mine heart, then am I nothing the better, for I should have no part of Christ's blood, but I am much the worse. For first, God condemneth me, who judges me after mine heart; and also mine own heart condemns me, because I have openly granted that which mine heart denies. And contrariwise, if I should believe this fully in mine heart, and yet for fear of persecution should deny it when I were examined openly of my faith, then shall I be condemned of God, except I repent, and also mine own heart shall be a witness to condemn me. And so it is very noisome and ungodly to be compelled unto anything, for God ever searcheth the heart, which cannot be compelled.

On the Pope's Pardons.

My lord saith, If a man take away purgatory, for what intent shall we need any pardons? As long, saith he, as no man regarded purgatory, there was no man that sought any pardon; for all the estimation* of pardons hangeth thereof, so that we shall have no need of them, if there be no purgatory.

Verily, I care not though I grant him that too. And I think that money was the mother of them both. For out of the scripture shall he be able to prove neither. But mammon is a great god; even of power enough to invent such knacks,† yea, and to make them articles of the faith, and to burn those that cannot believe them. And it was a

* Valuing. † Baubles, tricks.

pretty practice to make such points articles of the faith; for after that our holy fathers had given up preaching, and would take no more pains, neither serve their brethren any more, then set they up such articles of the faith as should bring in money to uphold their estate withal. And he that would not believe them, they rid him out of the way, for fear of disclosing their juggling; for he that doubteth of pardons and purgatory, he plucketh our holy father, the pope, by the beard.

Notwithstanding my lord confirms both pardons and purgatory, by the text that Christ spake unto Peter, (Matt. xvi.) To thee will I give the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou bindest upon the earth, it shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou loosest on the earth, it shall be loosed in heaven. But these words, saith my lord, had been spoken in vain, if he could not give pardons and loose men out of purgatory, &c.

As touching the keys, albeit they have oftentimes been declared, and in manner in every treatise that hath been put forth in the English tongue, yet will I somewhat show my mind in them. There is but one key of heaven, which Christ calleth the key of knowledge; (Luke xi.) and this key is the word of God. Christ rebuked the lawgivers for taking away this key from the people; for they with their traditions and false expositions, had fully excluded the key of knowledge which is the word of God, and had wholly shut up the scripture, as ours have done now-a-days. It is also called the key of David, which shutteth, and no man openeth; openeth, and no man shutteth. (Rev. iii.) And because of these two effects which it worketh, for it both shutteth and openeth, it hath the denomination of keys, and yet, as I said, it is indeed but one, which is the word of God. This key or keys, now call it what you will, since you know what it means, Christ delivered unto Peter, and unto his other apostles alike, which you shall easily perceive if you mark where and when they were given. For (Matt. xvi.) they were only promised, and not yet given; for Christ said, I will give thee the keys, and not, I give thee. But after he was risen from death, then performed he his promise, and gave the keys to all indifferently, as thou mayest see John xx.; and Luke (chap. xxiv.) expounds it, that he opened their understandings to understand the scripture, that repentance and forgiveness might be preached, &c. Therefore it is the word that bindeth and looseth through the preaching of it. For

when thou tellest them their vices and iniquities, condemning them by the law, then bindest thou them by the word of God. And when thou preachest mercy in Christ unto all that repent, then dost thou loose them by the word of God. Therefore, he that preaches not the word of God, can neither bind nor loose, no, though he call himself pope. And contrariwise, he that preaches his word, he bindeth and looseth as well as Peter and Paul, although he be called but Sir John of the country.* And consequently, to say that the pope can deliver any soul out of purgatory, if there were one, is but a vain lie, except he can prove that he goes down unto them, and preaches unto them the word of God, which is the salt that must season them, and the key that must let them out, for other loosing there is none. And likewise to say that the pope can give any pardon to redeem sins, except he preach to me that Christ's blood hath pardoned me, is even like vanity. Methinks also that he wades too deep to descend to purgatory by this text. For the text saith, that whatsoever he binds on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever he looses on earth, &c. But now, they grant themselves that purgatory is not on earth, but the third place in hell; and therefore it passes his bounds to stretch his hand to purgatory; and so this text cannot serve him.

Notwithstanding, my lord is not content to give him this power only, but he hath so far waded in the pope's power, that he hath granted him full authority to deliver all men from hell, if they be not damned already. For, saith he, whosoever hath committed a capital crime, hath thereby deserved damnation; and yet may the pope deliver him both from the crime, and also from the pain due unto it. And he affirms that three times for fear of forgetting.

Upon this point will I a little reason with my lord, and so will I make an end. If the pope may deliver any man from the crime that he hath committed, and also from the pain due unto it, as you affirm, then may he, by the same authority, deliver twenty, a hundred, a thousand, yea, and all the world; for I am sure you can show me no reason why he may deliver some and not all. If he can do it, then let him deliver every man that is on the point of death, both from the crime and from the pain, and so shall never man more either enter into hell nor yet into purgatory; which were the best deed and most charitable that ever he

* The parish priests were usually called "sir."

did; yea, and this ought he to do, if he could, although it should cost him his own life and soul thereto, as Moses and Paul give him example, but yet there is no jeopardy of either. Now if he can do it, as you say, and will not, then is he the most wretched and cruel tyrant that ever lived, even the very son of perdition, and worthy to be damned in a hundred thousand hells. For if he have received such power of God, that he may save all men, and yet will not, but suffer so many to be damned, I report me unto yourselves what he is worthy to have?

Now if any man would solve this reason and say, that he may do it, but that it is not meet for him to do it, because that by their pains, God's justice may be satisfied; I say, that this their evasion is nothing worth, neither yet can I imagine any way whereby they may have any appearance to escape. For my lord saith himself, that the pope must pacify God's justice for every soul that he delivereth from purgatory, and therefore hath he imagined that the pope hath in his hand the merits of Christ's passion, which he may apply at his pleasure where he will. And also he saith that the merits of Christ's passion are sufficient to redeem all the sins in the world. Now since these merits on their part are sufficient to satisfy the justice of God, and to redeem the whole world, and also that the pope hath them in his hand to distribute at his pleasure, then there is no more wanting but even the pope's distribution unto the salvation of the world. For he may pacify God's wrath, and satisfy his justice, saith my lord, by applying these merits to them that lack good works. And so, if the pope will, God's justice may be fully satisfied, and the whole world saved. Now if he may so justly and easily save the whole world, charity also moving him unto it, and yet will not apply these merits so fruitfully, then is the fault only his, and he the son of perdition, and worthy of more pain than can be imagined. And so is not the reason improved, but much more established, and as I think inevitable.

Behold, I pray you, whither my lord of Rochester hath brought our holy father, the pope, in advancing his power so high—even into the deepest pit of hell, which if my lord said true, it is impossible for him to avoid! But it chances unto him even as it customably does where such pride reigns; for when they are at the highest, then fall they down headlong unto their utter confusion and ruin.

FROM FRITH'S WORK ENTITLED

"A BULWARK AGAINST RASTALL."*

No condemnation for those that are in Christ Jesus.

It seemeth, saith Rastall, by the reasons that Frith hath alleged, that his intent is to bring the people in belief that there is no hell; for I allege in my answer to Rastall's dialogue, the saying of St. Paul, (Eph. i.) Christ chose us in him before the beginning of the world, that we might be holy and without spot in his sight; and again, (Eph. v.) Christ loved his congregation and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify it in the fountain of water through the word, to make it without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blame.

And upon these texts I conclude, that if Christ have so purged us that we are without spot, wrinkle, or blame in his sight, as Paul testifies, then will he never cast us into purgatory. For what should be purged in them that are without spot, wrinkle, or blame? And then somewhat to declare the matter, how we are sinners as long as we live, and yet without sin in the sight of God, add these words, which I would that all men did well note; and because Rastall leaves out the best of the matter, I will rehearse my own words again.

Peradventure, every man perceives not what this meaneth, that we are righteous in his sight, seeing that every man is a sinner; (1 John i.) therefore, I will briefly declare the meaning of the apostle. This is first a clear case, that there liveth no man upon the earth without sin, notwithstanding all they that were chosen in Christ, before the foundations of the world were laid, are without spot

* In the preface Fox states, "More and Rochester thought foul scorn, (see what the glory of this world and high estimation of ourselves doth,) that a young man of small reputation should take upon him to write against them so contrary to their opinion, and, to be short, took the matter so grievously that they could never be quiet till they had drunken his blood. Rastall though he perceived his arguments from natural reason to be sorely said to, yet was he not malicious as the others were, and therefore wrote he again, which work of Rastall came to Frith's hands when he was prisoner in the Tower of London, where he made the following answer. Which answer, after Rastall had read, he was well content to count his natural reason foolishness, and with hearty thanks given to God, became a child again, and sucked of the wisdom which cometh from above, and saveth all that are nourished therewith. In the which he continued to his life's end with the honour and glory of God."

of sin in the sight of God. (Eph. i.) So that they are both sinners, and righteous. If we consider the imperfection of our faith and charity, if we consider the conflict of the flesh and the spirit; (Gal. v.) if we consider our rebellious members which are under sin; (Rom. vii.) then are we grievous sinners: and contrariwise, if we believe that, of merciful favour, God gave his most dear Son to redeem us from our sin; if we believe that he imputeth not our sins unto us, but that his wrath is pacified in Christ and his blood, if we believe that he hath freely given us his Christ, and with him all things, so that we are destitute of no gift; (Rom. viii.) then are we righteous in his sight, and our conscience at peace with God, not through ourselves, but through our Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom. v.) So mayest thou perceive that thou art a sinner in thyself, and yet art thou righteous in Christ, for through him thy sin is not imputed nor reckoned unto thee: and so they to whom God imputeth not their sins, are blessed, righteous, without spot, wrinkle, or blame, (Rom. iv. Psal. xxxii.) and therefore will he never thrust them into purgatory. And for proof of this, I allege (as Rastall bears me witness) divers texts of St. Paul; (Eph. ii. Rom. iv. v. vii. viii.) but notwithstanding, Rastall saith that I have not recited them sufficiently, for I have left out somewhat which I have rehearsed for the opening of the truth, and then he brings in that which St. Paul exhorts and bids us, that we use no fornication, uncleanness, avarice, filthy or foolish speeches, for such shall have no inheritance in the kingdom of heaven: and even so say I too, but judge, good reader, what is this to the purpose; for it neither maketh for purgatory, nor against it. This text I could have alleged, if I had endeavoured to prove that we should do good works, which I never knew christian man deny, but else, as touching my matter, it is nothing to the purpose, and as well he might have reproved me, because I bring in no text to prove, that the Father of heaven is God, or to prove that which never man doubted of.

Then he (Rastall) alleges Paul, (Rom. v.) saying, Though grace do reign through Christ, shall we therefore dwell in sin? Nay, God forbid, saith Paul; and even so say I again. He alleges, (Rom. viii.) that there is no damnation to them which be in Christ Jesus if they live not after the flesh; and even so say I, but Rastall will say the contrary anon.

Besides that, he alleges, (Rom. iii.) We are freely justified by grace, by Christ's redemption, to show his justice the remission of sin done before; and yet (saith Rastall) Paul saith that the law is not destroyed by faith, but made stable, but this hath Frith left out of his book, to cause the people to believe, that they are cleansed by the blood of Christ only, and that there need no purgatory.

By these words you may evidently perceive, what Rastall means by this alleging of Paul for the establishing of the law; verily, that the work of the law should justify and cleanse you from sin, which is contrary to Paul and all scripture; for even in this same chapter he alleges Paul saith, that of works of the law, no flesh shall be justified in his sight; and saith, that the righteousness of God cometh by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all that believe. But concerning good works, I will touch more hereafter.

Furthermore, Rastall saith, that if my arguments could prove that there is no purgatory, it must follow as well that there is no hell for us that are christian men, though we continue still in sin. For if we are blessed, without spot, wrinkle, or blame, and that God will not therefore cast us into purgatory; then he will not cast us into hell, whatsoever sin we do commit.

Here, Rastall utters his blindness unto you, and shows you what understanding he hath in scripture; first, he arms himself with a false supposition, and yet thereupon he concludes his argument falsely. His supposition is this, that all men, who are baptized with material water, are very christian men, and have the true faith, and are those whom Paul affirms to be without spot, blame, or wrinkle. But thereto I say, Nay; for even as the outward circumcision made not the Jews the elect people, and children of salvation; so the outward baptism doth not make us the faithful members of Christ; but as they were the children of God, which were inwardly circumcised, even so, they that are washed inwardly from the concupiscence of this world, are the members of Christ, whom Paul affirms so to be purged through his blood. Again, you may know that Rastall knows none other faith, but that which may stand with all manner of sin; but the faith which we speak of, is the same which worketh through charity, whereof Paul speaketh. (Gal. v.) They that have this faith, are born of God and sin not: they that have

this faith, do hope and look daily for deliverance out of this thraldom and body of sin; and in the mean season they purify themselves, as he is pure. For if a man will say, that he knoweth Christ, or believeth in him, and keepeth not his commandments, he is a liar, and we renounce him to be any of this number that we speak of. And when Rastall saith, I would conclude there is no hell for them that are christian men, though they continue still in sin: I answer, He that committeth sin is of the devil; and I say again, that the christians whom we speak of, who are the children of God, cannot continue still in sin, but seek all means to fulfil God's commandments. Notwithstanding, the christians whom Rastall speaks of, who are the children of the devil, may do as they list; and indeed they had need to make a friend of Rastall to help them into his purgatory, if it be any better than hell; for they shall never come into heaven, except they repent and walk innocently in this world, as Christ and his little flock have ever done. For they that walk otherwise are none of his, though they wear mitres.

This little flock it is that are so cleansed, and not Rastall's multitude; and for this, is there neither hell nor purgatory ordained; even as for the hope, that continues still in sin, is ordained no heaven. And that there is no hell ordained for these faithful followers of Christ, I will prove even by this word of Paul, which Rastall rehearsed before; (Rom. viii.) that there is no condemnation to them that be in Christ Jesus, if they live not after the flesh. Here Rastall hath alleged that which shall condemn him. For if there be no damnation—But because you are somewhat slow in perceiving the matter, I shall reduce it into a syllogism, on this manner:

There is no damnation unto them that are in Christ Jesus, if they live not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Every hell is damnation.

Therefore, there is no hell to them that are in Christ Jesus, if they live not after the flesh but after the Spirit. This is the conclusion—not by any profit that I think the poor commonalty can take by such babbling, but only to satisfy your mind and pleasure. Notwithstanding, one thing I must put you in remembrance, that you have falsely translated the text; for the text hath not that conditional, although I was contented to take it at your hands to see what you could prove, but the text saith thus,

There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, which walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. Where Paul certifies you, that they which are in Christ Jesus walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit; so that you may gather by Paul, that if they walk not after the Spirit, they are not in Christ Jesus. That is to say, they are none of Christ's, although Rastall will call them christian men; therefore, dear brethren, look that no man deceive himself, for Christ is not the minister of sin. If we be delivered from sin through Christ, then must we walk in a new conversation of our life, or else we are still in darkness. Remember that we have this precious treasure in frail, brittle, and earthy vessels; let us therefore, with fear and trembling, work our health (salvation), and make stable our vocation and election; for if we retain the truth and knowledge of God in sin and unrighteousness, we shall shortly perceive the wrath of God upon us with infinite delusions, and the end of us shall be worse than the beginning. Awake therefore and understand your health.

Now you may see how he concludes that I establish this error—that there is no hell. For seeing my arguments and Paul (Rom. viii.) do conclude, that there is no hell nor damnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, and are his faithful followers, he thinks it should well follow, that if there be no hell for them, that there is no hell for any man. For in his second chapter, and also in the beginning of the third, he saith, that I deny hell; and when we come to his probation, there is nothing said but that which Paul confirms, that is, There is no damnation for them that are in Christ Jesus, which walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, which are through Christ without spot, wrinkle, or blame. And so though Rastall appear to himself to conclude like a sage philosopher, yet I answer you, he concludes like an ignorant sophister, as all men may see, for it follows not, Paul and Frith say, there is no hell; as contrariwise, it follows not, there is no heaven for Rastall's christian men who continue still in sin; therefore there is no heaven for the devil their father, and yet is there heaven for Christ and his elect. I have before declared how Christ's elect are sinners and no sinners. And now because you should not mistake the texts of St. John, which I before alleged, I will show you how they do commit sin, which I will touch again, because you shall not think, that I would leave you in ignorance and darkness.

There are two parts in a faithful man, which rebel each against the other, and are at continual strife, and both of them have divers names in scripture. The one is called the inward man, the heart, the mind, the will, and the spirit; the other is called the outward man, the rebellious members, the body of sin, and the flesh; and these in a faithful man keep continual war, and albeit the one be subdued and taken prisoner of the other, yet he never consents to his enemy. He cannot leave him, neither will make peace with him, but will labour what he can, and will call for all that he thinks will help him, to be delivered from his enemy; and then wars upon him afresh, when the faithful man is brought to the knowledge of God, and believes in Christ, and hath his will and mind renewed with the Spirit of God, that consents to the law of God, that it is good, righteous, and holy; and begins to love the law, and has a will and a desire to fulfil the law of God, and not to despise his heavenly Father. And look, how much he loves the law, counting it righteous and holy; even so much does he hate sin, which the law forbids, and abhors it in his heart and inward man; and then albeit the outward man and rebellious members do at times besiege him and take him captive under sin, yet the inward man does not consent that this sin is good, and the law naught which forbids it; neither does the heart delight in this same sin; neither can it delight in such sin, because the Spirit of God testifieth unto him, that it is abominable in the sight of God. And then fighteth the inward man against the outward with faith, prayer, almsdeeds, and fasting, and labours to subdue the members, lamenting that he has been overcome, because he fears to displease God his Father, and desires him, for the blood of his Son Christ, that he will forgive that which is past; and his diligence that he takes in taming his members, is not recompense towards God for the sin that is past, but to subdue the flesh that he sin no more. This rebellion had Paul, (Rom. vii.) saying, That he did not that good thing which he would, but the evil which he hated, that he did. That is, he did not fulfil the good law of God, as his heart, will, and inward man desired, but did the evil, as touching his flesh and outward man, which he hated, and so he sinned with his outward man. Then how is this true, that he that committeth sin is of the devil, and he that is of God committeth no sin? Was not Paul of God? Yes,

verily, and albeit he committed sin with his members and outward man, yet he sinned not, for he saith, If I do that which I hate, then is it not I that do it, but the sin that dwelleth in me; and even likewise the faithful followers of Christ commit no sin, for they hate it; and if they become entangled with sin, it is not they that do it, as Paul saith, but the sin that dwelleth in them, which God hath left to exercise them, as he left the Philistines to exercise and nurture the children of Israel; and if the remnant of sin at any time look aloft and begin to reign, then he sends some cross of adversity or sickness to help to suppress it. And thus shall it be as long as we live, but when we are once dead, then our members rebel no more, and then neither purgatory nor any other cross is needed; for the outward man is turned into vanity, and our inward man was ever pure, through believing the word of God, and never consented to sin, and needeth neither purgatory in this world, nor in the world to come, but only for subduing the outward man, and therefore after this life he shall never have any purgatory. Mark well what I say, and read it again, for more shall read it than shall understand it, but he that hath ears, let him hear.

On Repentance and Satisfaction.

The second error that Rastall lays to my charge, is, that I would bring the people in belief that repentance of a man helpeth not for the remission of his sin.

In proving this second error against me, Rastall takes such great pains that he is almost beside himself. For he saith that I would make men believe, that it matters not whether they sin or not. Why so, brother Rastall? Verily, because I allege St. John, St. Paul, Ezekiel, and Jeremiah, to quench the hot fire of purgatory, and allege no authorities to prove good works; whereunto I answer, as I did before, that it is nothing to my purpose; for the proving of good works neither makes for purgatory nor against it. I could have alleged all those texts if I had intended to prove that I should do good works, which I never knew christian men deny, but as touching my matter, it is nothing to the purpose, and he might as well have reproved me, because I bring in no texts to prove that the Father of heaven is God, or to prove that which never

man doubted of; notwithstanding, if Rastall had impartial eyes, I spake sufficiently of good works in the thirty-fourth argument against his dialogue; let all men read the place and judge.

Rastall takes the matter very grievously that I attempt to allege how St. John and St. Paul send us to Christ; and then add that we know no other to take away sin but only Christ; and because I add this word "only," therefore he thinks that I quite destroy repentance; whereunto I answer, that I added not this word "only" for nought, but I did it by the authority of St. John, who saith, If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son purifieth us from all sin; whereupon I say, that for us who are in the light, his blood only is sufficient, but for your christian men who continue still in sin, and walk in darkness after their father the devil, must some other means be found, or else they shall never enter into the kingdom of heaven.

But because I will be short, let Rastall note that I find two kinds of repentance; one is without faith, and is such a repentance as Judas and Rastall's christian men, who continue still in sin, have at the latter end, which rather purchases them a halter than the remission of sins. Another repentance follows justification and remission of sins, and is a flourishing fruit of faith. For when by faith we do perceive the favour and kindness that our loving Father hath showed us in his Son Christ Jesus, and that he hath reconciled us unto himself by the blood of his Son; then begin we to love him, the more we hate the body of sin, and lament and are sorry that our members are so frail that they cannot fulfil the law of God; and so in mourning and bewailing our infirmity, it causes us to abstain from both meat and drink, and all worldly pleasures, which is the pure fasting that we talk of, but you understand it not. And this repentance cometh not to purge the sins which are committed before, but only taketh occasion by the sins before committed, to know what poison there remained in our flesh, and seeketh all means to make us hate this body of sin, and to subdue it with all manner of works that God hath appointed, to the intent that it should in time to come no more displease God, our most merciful Father, who of gentleness so often pardoneth and forgiveth us, as I have touched before.

This is the manner of repentance which I find in scripture, and this helpeth that we should sin no more; but what Rastall dreams I wot not. But to express to the uttermost what I mean by repentance, mark this example; If a man build a house which costs him much labour and money, and have laid no sure foundation, but when a tempest cometh his house doth fall, then he is very sorry, and repents that he hath so foolishly bestowed his money and labour; notwithstanding, all this sorrow and repentance cannot set up his house again which is fallen, but only it takes occasion by the ruin of the house, to teach the owner to be wiser against another time, that when he builds again, he may make a sure foundation. Even so, though thou repent ever so much, that cannot get remission for the sins that are past, but they must be pardoned only by the faith of Christ's blood. Nevertheless, it teaches thee wisdom, and teaches thee to tame thy body and subdue it, and to cast a low foundation,* that in time thou mayest the better resist the assaults of the devil, the world, and the flesh. This doth Frith teach of repentance, let the world take it as they will, but Christ's sheep do hear His voice.

On Penance.

The third error which Rastall layeth against me is, that I would make men believe that they need not to do penance for the satisfaction of their sins.

Every child may answer him to this, if he ever read or perceive what I wrote before of repentance. For as they take repentance for the sorrow and mourning that follows the crime, even so they call penance the good works that ensue of repentance; and these good works which follow, do mortify the members, and exercise us in God's commandments, that we sin no more. But they can get no more remission of the sin which is once past, than that which they call repentance; and yet do we neither destroy sorrowing for sin, nor good works, as he falsely reports of us, but we teach you how they ought to be done, and that they are fruits of faith, and mortify our members, and are profitable to our neighbour, and a testimony unto us that

* To lay a deep foundation.

we are the children of our heavenly Father. As by example, I say, that neither the sun nor the moon do justify us, or purchase remission of our sins; and yet I would not that Rastall should say that I deny or destroy the sun and the moon; for I say, that without them we can have no light, and that we cannot be without them.

And as touching the solution of this, that penance taken in its largest signification, both for good works and taking of pains, is not satisfaction for sins; I must tell you once again, that there are two manner of satisfactions, the one is to God, the other to my neighbour. To God, all the world cannot make satisfaction for one crime, insomuch that if every grass of the ground were a man, as holy as ever was Paul or Peter, and should pray unto God all their life long for one crime, yet could they not make satisfaction for it; but it is only the blood of Christ that hath made full satisfaction to God for all such crimes; (Heb. ix.) or else were there no remedy, but we should all perish. There is another satisfaction, which is to my neighbour, whom I have offended, whom I am bound to pacify as we two can agree, and as the laws of the realm determine between us; as, if I have defamed him, then am I bound to pacify him, and to restore him to his good name again. If I have murdered any man, then by the laws of the realm I must die for it, to pacify my neighbour and the commonwealth. But yet I am sure Rastall is not so childish as to think that this civil satisfaction is the true satisfaction which pacifies God's wrath for breaking his law. For if thou murder a man, and should die a hundred times for it, yet except thou have satisfaction of Christ's blood, thou shalt be damned thereto. And so I spake, that no temporal pain was instituted of God for the intent that we should satisfy God's wrath thereby.

To what end Good Works are available.

Now are we come to the fourth error, where Rastall untruly reports on me, that I would persuade the people that good works done by any man in this world are nothing available unto him that doth them; and that it is no hurt nor hindrance unto any man, though he never do any. Because I say they justify not before God, therefore he

thinks, that other men would understand me as wisely as he does, and argue that they are nothing available; but I must desire him to put on his spectacles, and look again upon my book, and he shall find these words: "Peradventure, thou wilt answer unto me, Shall I then do no good deeds? I answer, Yes. Thou wilt answer me, Wherefore? I answer, Thou must do them because God hath commanded them. I answer, Thou art living in this world with men, and hast conversation with them, therefore hath God appointed thee what thou shalt do to the profit of thy neighbour and taming of thy flesh, as Paul testifieth. (Eph. ii.) We are his work in Christ Jesus, unto good works, which works God hath prepared that we should walk in them. These works God would have us do, that the unfaithful might see the godly and virtuous conversation of his faithful, and thereby be compelled to glorify our Father which is in heaven: (Matt v.) and so are they both profitable unto thy neighbour, and also a testimony unto thee, by which a man may know that thou art the right son of thy heavenly Father, and a very Christ unto thy neighbour: and after he teaches that we ought to do these works without having respect either to heaven or hell, but attending through charity the wealth of our neighbour," &c.

'I wonder that Rastall is not ashamed to say that I would make them believe that they are not available; therefore, good reader, note my words. First, I say, we must do them, because God hath commanded them—is it not available to keep the commandments of God? Secondly, I say, that they are to the profit of thy neighbour—is it not available? Thirdly, I say, that they tame our flesh—is it not available? Fourthly, I say, they are to the glory of God—is it not available? Fifthly, I say, they are a testimony to him that doth them, by the which men may know that he is the very son of God—is that not available? Belike, Rastall counts nothing available, but that which justifies before God; he will say the sun is not available, because it justifies not; fire is not available in his eyes, because it justifies not, &c.

Then Rastall saith, that I make a wonder's work with the scripture, and alleges certain texts that we ought to do good works, which I never denied, and thereupon he would conclude that works save and justify, and plays the ball

lustily over the cord ;* but there stood a post right in the way, and he hit it so full, that it made the ball to rebound over again backward. For in alleging for his purpose what Paul saith, (Eph. ii.) he hath lost the game : the words are these, By grace you are saved by your faith, and that is not of you, it is the gift of God, and not of works, that no man should glorify himself ; we are the works created of God in Christ Jesus, which God hath prepared that we should walk in them. Here, because he would have the latter end of the text to serve for his purpose which teaches good works, which I never denied, he brings in that which quite confutes his own opinion ; for his opinion, which in all places he hath laboured to prove, is, that we are saved by good works ; but now mark what he alleges out of Paul ; By grace you are saved by your faith : and that is not of you, it is the gift of God and not of works ; for that no man should glorify himself; here Paul saith plainly that our salvation is not of works ; and so hath Rastall cast down that he built before, and may be likened to a shrewd cow, which when she hath given a large mess of milk turneth it down with her heel.

Thus have I answered to as much of Rastall's treatise as I could get. If there be any more which may come to my hands, I shall do my diligence to disclose his deceit ; so that God give me leave to keep the court with him, he shall win but little, except he convey his balls more craftily; and yet the truth to say we play not on even hand, for I am in a manner as a man bound to a post, and cannot so well bestow me in my play, as if I were at liberty, for I may not have such books as are necessary for me, neither yet pen, ink, nor paper, but only secretly ; so that I am in continual fear, both of the lieutenant and of my keeper, lest they should espy any such thing by me; and therefore it is little marvel, though the work be imperfect. For whensoever I hear the keys ring at the door, straight all must be conveyed out of the way ; and then if any notable thing had been in my mind, it was clean lost, and therefore, I besecch thee, good reader, count it as a thing born out of season, which for many causes cannot have its perfect form and shape, and pardon me my rudeness and imperfection.

* An allusion to the method in which the game of tennis was played.

Note on the Supplication of Beggars.

A few particulars may be given respecting the tract, written by Simon Fish, which occasioned this controversy respecting purgatory.

The Supplication of Beggars, is printed in Fox's Acts and Monuments. It is an ably written exposure of the mendicant orders of friars, drawn up in such a manner as to make a powerful impression upon the public mind. Though some allowance may be made for the statements being highly coloured, it presents a painful picture of the state of England shortly before the Reformation. The country was then rapidly becoming the prey of the monastic orders, and had not the dissolution of the monasteries, and the Reformation, shortly followed, in all probability England would soon have become in a similar condition to the state of the bigoted Romish countries at the present day.

The Supplication states, that the ecclesiastics had then "gotten into their hands more than the third part of the realm," besides the tenth part of every article of produce, and even of every servant's wages; "they look so narrowly upon their profits, that the poor wives must be accountable to them for every tenth egg, or else she getteth not her rights (absolution) at Easter, and shall be taken for a heretic." To this was added for the probates of wills, offerings at pilgrimages, sums for masses, and dirges for every man and child that is buried, "or else they will accuse their friends and executors of heresy." Also mortuaries, confessions, excommunications, pardons, proceedings in ecclesiastical courts, and alms given to begging friars, &c. The writer calculates there were at that time 520,000 households in England, and that each of these paid a penny a quarter to each of the five orders of friars, making an annual total of 330,133*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* Though this sum were somewhat exaggerated, yet the amount actually collected must have been enormous. Considerable information respecting the proceedings of these friars may be derived from Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, and Erasmus' Colloquies, particularly his Funus, which pieces were written previously to the Reformation. The writer of the Supplication calculates that though these friars were but one person for every four hundred in the realm, they received half of its income.

The licentious conduct of the Romish clergy, who endeavoured to act so "that no man should know his own child," is described. The particulars cannot be given here, but Fish asks, What man or woman will work for their usual wages, when they may receive many times more for serving the wicked pleasures of these ecclesiastics? describing the profligacy which was the consequence. There is undoubted evidence that much of the wealth of the conventual establishments was expended in luxury and licentiousness, doubtless a part of that which was said to be applied as alms. The author then says, "What law can be made against them that may be available? Who is he, though he may be grieved very sore, that for the murder of his ancestor, ravishment of his wife or daughter, for robbery, trespass, maiming, debt, or any other offence, dare lay it to their charge by way of action? And if he do, then is he presently by their wiliness accused of heresy, yea, they will so handle him ere he pass, that except he will bear a fagot for their pleasure, he shall be excommunicated, and then all his actions are dashed." Fish also refers to the manner in which "the bishop of London raged for the indicting of certain curates of extortion and incontinency,

the last year in the wardmote quest," and the lamentable case of Hunn, who, having sued a priest at law a few years before, had been imprisoned for heresy and murdered in prison by the bishop's chancellor and his assistants, who not only escaped punishment upon paying a fine, but had been rewarded by considerable preferment.

The Supplication farther shows that the only colour to support this monstrous system " is that they say they pray for us to God, to deliver our souls out of the pains of PURGATORY; without whose prayers, they say, or at least without the pope's pardon, we could never be delivered thence." This gainful error is exposed, " that there is not one word spoken of it in all holy scripture," and it is shown to be a main reason why the doctrines of truth were suppressed. "This is why they will not let the new testament go abroad in your mother tongue, lest men should espy that by their cloaked hypocrisy they fast translate your kingdom into their hands; that they are not obedient unto your high power; that they are cruel, unclean, unmerciful, and hypocrites; that they seek not the honour of Christ, but their own; that remission of sins is not given by the pope's pardon, but by Christ, for the sure faith and trust that we have in him." The king is then intreated to put down the monastic establishments.

A number of copies of this powerful tract were scattered about the streets by night in the year 1526; and Fox relates, " After that the clergy of England, and especially the cardinal (Wolsey), understood that these books of the Beggars' Supplication were strewn abroad in the streets of London, and also before the king, the cardinal not only caused his servants diligently to attend to gather them up, that they should not come into the king's hands, but also when he understood that the king had received one or two of them, he came unto him, saying, 'If it shall please your grace, there are divers seditious persons who have scattered abroad books containing manifest errors and heresies,' and desired his grace to beware of them. Whereupon the king putting his hand in his bosom, took out one of the books, and delivered it to the cardinal! Then the cardinal, together with his bishops, consulted how they might provide a speedy remedy for this mischief, and thereupon determined to give out a commission to forbid the reading of all such English books, and namely this book of Beggars, and the new testament of Tindal's translation."

More's reply was entitled, " The poor seely (simple) souls pewling out of purgatory." He represents the souls in torment, " sometimes lamentably complaining, sometimes scoffing at the author of the Beggars' book, sometimes scolding and railing at him." Fish also translated a tract, entitled, " The Sum of Scripture," from the German.

We have little or no idea in this country of the consequences of the doctrine of PURGATORY;—it is the main support of the fabric of the Romish church, and is most injurious to the welfare of every country where it is received. It cannot be necessary to refer the reader particularly to the numerous works in which the doctrine of purgatory is refuted, and the practical results described. Some particulars relative to the orders of Friars will be found upon referring to the life and writings of Wickliff.

A LETTER TO THE FAITHFUL.

A letter which John Frith wrote unto the faithful followers of Christ's gospel, while he was prisoner in the Tower of London, for the word of God. A. D. 1532.

Grace and peace from God the Father, through our Saviour Christ Jesus, be with all them that love the Lord unfeignedly. Amen.

It cannot be expressed, dearly beloved in the Lord, what joy and comfort it is to my heart to perceive how the word of God hath wrought and continually worketh among you: so that I find no small number walking in the ways of the Lord, according as he gave us commandment, willing that we should love each other, as he loved us. Now have I experience of the faith which is in you, and can testify that it is without dissimulation, that ye love not in word and tongue only, but in work and verity.

What can be more trial of a faithful heart, than to adventure, not only to aid and succour by the means of others, which without danger may not be admitted unto us, but also personally to visit the poor oppressed, and see that nothing be lacking unto them, but that they have both spiritual comfort, and bodily sustenance, notwithstanding the strait inhibition and terrible menacing of these worldly rulers; even ready to abide the extreme jeopardies that tyrants can imagine.

This is an evidence, that you have prepared yourselves to the cross of Christ, according to the counsel of the wise man, which saith, "My son, when thou shalt enter into the way of the Lord, prepare thyself unto tribulation." This is an evidence that ye have cast your accounts, and have wherewith to finish the tower which ye have begun to build. And I doubt not, but that He which hath begun to work in you, shall for his glory accomplish the same, even unto the coming of the Lord, who shall give unto every man according to his deeds.

And albeit, God, of his secret judgments, for a time keep the rod from some of them that follow his steps, yet let them surely reckon upon it, for there is no doubt but that

"all which will devoutly live in Christ, must suffer persecution: for whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, and scourgeth every child that he receiveth: for what child is that whom the father chastiseth not? If ye be not under correction, of which we are all partakers, then are ye bastards and not children."

Nevertheless, we may not suppose that our most loving Father should do that, because he rejoices in our blood or punishment, but he doeth it for our singular profit, that we may be partakers of holiness, and that the remnants of sin, which through the frailty of our members rebel against the spirit and will, causing our works to go imperfectly forwards, may somewhat be suppressed, lest they should subdue us and reign over us, as I have sufficiently declared in the epistle of my book which treats of purgatory, to the which I refer them that desire to be further instructed in this matter.

Of these things God had given me the speculation before, and now it hath pleased him to put in use and practice upon me. I ever thought, and yet do think, that to walk after God's word, would cost me my life at one time or another. And albeit, that the king's grace should take me into his favour, and not suffer the bloody Edomites to have their pleasures upon me; yet will I not think that I am escaped, but that God hath only deferred it for a season, to the intent that I should work somewhat that he hath appointed me to do, and so to use me unto his glory.

And I beseech all the faithful followers of the Lord, to arm themselves with the same supposition, marking themselves with the sign of the cross; not from the cross, as the superstitious multitude doth, but rather to the cross, in token that they are ever ready willingly to receive the cross, when it shall please God to lay it upon them. The day that it comes not, count it clear won, giving thanks to the Lord, who hath kept it from you. And then when it comes, it shall not dismay you; for it is no new thing, but even that which ye have continually looked for. And doubt not but that God who is faithful shall not suffer you to be tempted above that which ye are able to bear, but shall ever send some occasion by the which ye shall stand steadfast. For either he shall blind the eyes of your enemies, and diminish their tyrannous power, or else when he hath suffered them to do their best, and the dragon hath cast a whole flood of waters after you, he shall cause even

the very earth to open her mouth and swallow them up. So faithful is he, and careful to ease us, what time the vexation should be too heavy for us.

He shall send a Joseph before you, against ye shall come into Egypt; yea, he shall so provide for you, that ye shall have a hundred fathers for one, a hundred mothers for one, a hundred houses for one, and that in this life, as I have proved by experience; and after this life, everlasting joy with Christ our Saviour.

Notwithstanding, since this steadfastness comes not of ourselves, for, as Augustine saith, there was never man so weak or frail, no not the greatest offender that ever lived, but that every man of his own nature should be as frail, and commit as great enormities, except he were kept from it by the Spirit and power of God; I beseech you, brethren in the Lord Jesus Christ, and for the love of his Spirit, to pray with me, that we may be vessels to his laud and praise, what time soever it pleases him to call upon us.

The Father of glory give us the Spirit of wisdom, understanding, and knowledge, and lighten the eyes of our minds, that we may know his ways, praising the Lord eternally. If it please any of our brethren to write unto us of any such doubts, as peradventure may be found in our books, it should be very acceptable unto us, and, as I trust, not unfruitful for them: for I will endeavour myself to satisfy them in all points, by God's grace. To whom I commit to be governed and defended for ever. Amen.

JOHN FRITH,

The prisoner of Jesus Christ, at all times abiding his pleasure.

A defence of some of the Reformers from the aspersions cast upon them by sir Thomas More, in his book against Frith.—From Frith's Treatise on the Sacrament.

SIR THOMAS MORE says, Frith teaches in a few leaves shortly all the poison that Wickliff, Œcolampadius, Tindal, and Zuinglius have taught in all their books before, concerning the blessed sacrament of the altar: not only affirming it to be very bread still, as Luther doth, but also as these other beasts do, saith it is nothing else. And after the same, sir Thomas More saith, "These dregs hath he drunken of Wickliff, Œcolampadius, Tindal, and Zuinglius,

and so also hath he all that he argues here beside; which four, what manner of folk they are, is well perceived and known, and God hath, in part, with his open vengeance declared."

Luther is not the mark that I run at, but the scripture of God. I do neither affirm nor deny any thing, because Luther so said; but because the scriptures of God do so conclude and determine. I take not Luther for such an author, that I think he cannot err, but I think verily that he both may err and doth err, in certain points, although not in such as concern salvation and damnation; for in these, blessed be God, all those, whom ye call heretics, do agree right well. And likewise, I do not allow this, because Wickliff, Œcolampadius, Tindal, and Zuinglius so say, but because I see them in that place more purely expound the scripture, and that the process of the text more favours their sentence.

And where you say, that I affirm it to be bread still, as Luther doth, the same I say again; not because Luther so saith, but because I can prove my words true by scripture, reason, nature, and doctors. Paul calls it bread, saying, The bread which we break, is it not the fellowship of the body of Christ? For we, though we be many, are yet one body and one bread, as many as are partakers of one bread. And again he saith, As often as ye eat of this bread, or drink of this cup, you shall show the Lord's death until he come. Also Luke called it bread in the Acts, saying, They continued in the fellowship of the apostles, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer. Also Christ called the cup, the fruit of the vine, saying, I shall not from henceforth drink of the fruit of the vine, until I drink it new in the kingdom of my Father. Furthermore, nature teaches you, that both the bread and wine continue in their nature. For the bread becomes mouldy if it be kept long, yea, and worms breed in it, and the poor mouse will run away with it, and desire no other meat to her dinner, which are arguments evident enough, that there remaineth bread. Also, the wine, if it were reserved, would wax sour, as they confess themselves, and therefore they housel the lay people but with one kind only,* because the wine cannot continue, nor be reserved, to have ready at hand, when need were. And surely as, if there remained no bread, it could not mould, nor wax full of worms; even so,

* Allow them to communicate in one kind only.

if there remained no wine, it could not wax sour, and therefore it is but false doctrine, that our prelates so long have published.

Finally, that there remains bread, might be proved by the authority of many doctors, who call it bread and wine, as Christ and his apostles did. And although some sophisters would wrest their sayings, and expound them after their fantasy, yet shall I allege them one doctor, who was also pope of Rome, that makes so plainly with us, that they shall be compelled with shame to hold their tongues. For pope Gelasius writes on this manner: Surely the sacraments of the body and blood of Christ are a godly thing, and therefore through them are we made partakers of the godly nature. And yet does it not cease to be the substance, or nature, of bread and wine, but they continue in the property of their own nature, and surely the image and similitude of the body and blood of Christ are celebrated in the act of the mysteries. This I am sure was the old doctrine, which they cannot avoid. And therefore, with the scripture, nature, and fathers, I conclude there remains the substance and nature of bread and wine.

And where you say, that we affirm it to be nothing else, I dare say, that you untruly report on us all. And hereafter I will show you what it is more than bread. And where you say, that it is well enough known, what manner of folk they are, and that God hath in part with his open vengeance declared; I answer, that master Wickliff was noted while he was living, to be a man not only of most famous doctrine, but also of a very sincere life and conversation. Nevertheless, to declare your malicious minds and vengeable hearts, as men say, forty-five years after he was buried you took him up and burnt him, which fact declared your fury, although he felt no fire; but blessed be God, who hath given such tyrants no further power, but over this corruptible body. For the soul ye cannot bind nor burn, but God may bless where you curse, and curse where you bless.

And as for Œcolampadius, whom you also call Huskin, his greatest adversaries have ever commended his conversation, and godly life, which when God had appointed his time, gave place unto nature, as every man must, and died of a canker.

And Tindal, I trust, liveth well content with such a poor apostle's life, as God gave his Son Christ, and his faithful

minister in this world; who is not sure of so many mites, as ye are yearly of pounds, although I am sure that for his learning and judgment in scripture, he were more worthy to be promoted, than all the bishops in England. I received a letter from him, which was written since Christmas, wherein, among other matters, he writes thus: "I call God to record, against the day we shall appear before our Lord Jesus, to give a reckoning of our doings, that I never altered one syllable of God's word against my conscience, nor would do this day, if all that is in earth, whether it be honour, pleasure, or riches, might be given me. Moreover, I take God to record to my conscience, that I desire of God to myself in this world, no more than that, without which I cannot keep his laws," &c. Judge, christian reader, whether these words are not spoken of a faithful, clear, innocent heart. And as for his behaviour, it is such, that no man can reprove him of any sin; howbeit, no man is innocent before God, who beholdeth the heart.

Finally, Zuinglius was a man of such learning and gravity, besides eloquence, that I think, no man in christendom might have compared with him, notwithstanding he was slain in battle in defending his city and commonwealth, against the assault of wicked enemies, which cause was most righteous. And if master More meant, that was the vengeance of God, and declared him to be an evil person, because he was slain; I may say, nay, and show example of the contrary, for sometimes God gives the victory against them that have most righteous cause, as it is evident in the book of Judges, where all the children of Israel were gathered together, to punish the shameful sin of the tribe of Benjamin. (Judges xx. xxi.) Here it is evident that the children of Israel lost the victory twice, and yet notwithstanding had a just cause, and fought at God's commandment. Besides that, Judas Maccabeus was slain in a righteous cause, as it is manifest in the first book of the Maccabees. And therefore it can be no evident argument of the vengeance of God, that he was slain in battle in a righteous cause, and therefore methinks that this man is too malapert, so bluntly to enter into God's judgment, and give sentence in that matter, before he is called to counsel.

A Comparison between the Paschal Lamb and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

From Frith's Treatise on the Sacrament.

Now, we shall shortly express the pith of our matter, and borrow the figure of the paschal lamb, which is in all points so like. That the offering of the paschal lamb did signify the offering of Christ's body, is plain by Paul, who saith, Christ our paschal lamb is offered up for us. (1 Cor. v.) When the children of Israel were very sad and heavy for their sore oppression under the power of Pharaoh, for the more miracles were showed the worse were they handled, God sent unto them by Moses, that every household should kill a lamb, to be a sacrifice unto God, and that they should eat him, with their staves in their hands, their loins girded, and shoes on their feet, even as men that were going a hasty journey. This lamb must they eat hastily and make a joyful maundy.* Now, because they should not say, that they could not be merry, for their oppression, and what could the lamb help them; he added glad tidings unto it, and said, This is the passing by of the Lord, who this night shall pass by you, and slay all the first-begotten within the land of Egypt, and shall deliver you out of your bondage, and bring you into the land that he hath promised unto your fathers. Mark the process and conveyance of this matter; for even likewise it is in our sacrament. The apostles were sad and heavy, partly considering the bondage of sin wherewith they were oppressed, and partly because he told them that he must depart from them, in whom they did put all their hope of their deliverance. While they were in this heaviness, Christ thought to comfort them, and to give them the seal of their deliverance, and he took in his hand bread, blessed and brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, This is my body which shall be given for you. For this night shall the power of Pharaoh, that devil, be destroyed, and to-morrow shall you be delivered from Egypt, the place of sin, and shall take your journey towards the heavenly mansion, which is prepared of God for all that love him. Now, compare them together.

* The Thursday before Easter; so called from the mandate or command given by our Lord to his disciples on that day to commemorate the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The word maundy was used to signify the celebration of the sacrament.

1. The paschal lamb was instituted and eaten the night before the children of Israel were indeed delivered from Egypt. Likewise, was the sacrament instituted and eaten the night before we were delivered from our sins.

2. The paschal lamb was a very lamb indeed.* And so is the sacrament very bread indeed.

3. The paschal lamb was called the passing-by of the Lord, who destroyed the power of Pharaoh, and delivered them. The sacrament is called the body of the Lord, who destroyed the power of the devil, and delivered us.

4. As many as ate the paschal lamb in faith, were very joyful and gave God great thanks; for they were sure the next day to be delivered out of Egypt. As many as did eat his sacrament in faith, were joyful and gave God great thanks; for they were sure the next day to be delivered from their sin.

5. They that did not eat the paschal lamb in faith, could not be joyful; for they were not so sure of deliverance from the power of Pharaoh. They that did not eat this sacrament in faith, could not be joyful; for they were not sure of deliverance from the power of the devil.

6. They that believed the word of the Lord, did more eat the passing-by of the Lord which should deliver them, than they did the lamb. They that did believe the word of the Lord, did more eat the body of the Lord, which should be given for their deliverance, than they did the bread. For that doth a man most eat, which he most hath in memory and most revolveth in mind, as appears by Christ. (John iv.) I have meat to eat that ye know not of.

7. They that believed not the next day to be delivered from Egypt, did not eat the passing-by of the Lord, although they ate the lamb. They that believed not the next day to be delivered from sin, did not eat the body of the Lord, although they ate the bread.

8. The children of Israel were but once delivered from Egypt; notwithstanding, they did every year eat the lamb, to keep that fact in perpetual remembrance. Even so, Christ bought and redeemed us but once for all, and was offered and sacrificed but once for all, though the sacrament thereof be daily broken among us, to keep that benefit in continual memory.

9. As many as ate the paschal lamb in faith, and believed God's word, as touching their deliverance from Egypt,

* A real lamb.

were as sure of their deliverance through faith, as they were sure of the lamb by eating it. As many as do eat this sacrament in faith, and believe God's word as touching their deliverance from sin, are as sure of their deliverance through faith, as they are sure of the bread by eating it.

10. As many as ate of that paschal lamb, did magnify their God, testifying that he only was the God almighty, and they his people cleaving to him, to be delivered by his power from all danger. As many as eat of this sacrament, do magnify their God, testifying that he only is the God almighty, and they his people cleaving to him to be delivered by his power from all danger.

11. When the Israelites were delivered from Egypt, they ate nevertheless the paschal lamb, which was still called the passing-by, because it was the remembrance of the passing-by of the Lord, and they heartily rejoiced, offering him sacrifice, and acknowledging with infinite thanks, that they were the fellowship of them, that had such a merciful God. Now, Christ's elect are delivered from sin, they eat nevertheless the sacrament, which is still called his body that once died for their deliverance, and heartily rejoice, offering to him the sacrifice of praise, and acknowledging with infinite thanks, that they are of the fellowship of them that have such a merciful God.

12. The paschal lamb, when after their deliverance it was yearly eaten, brought as much mirth and joy unto them that did eat it in faith, as it did to their fathers who felt Pharaoh's fury, and were not yet delivered. For they knew right well that except God of his mercy and wonderful power had so delivered them, they should also themselves have been bond in the land of Egypt and under that wicked prince Pharaoh; of which bondage they greatly rejoiced to be rid already, and thanked God highly, because they found themselves in that plenteous land, which God provided for them. The sacrament, which after our deliverance is yearly and daily eaten, brings as much joy unto us, that eat it in faith, as it did to the apostles who were not yet delivered. For we know right well, that except God of his mercy and through the blood of his Son, had so delivered us, we should also ourselves have been bond in Egypt, the place of sin, under that wicked prince, the devil; of which bondage we greatly rejoice to be rid already, and thank God highly because we find ourselves in the state of grace, and have received through faith the

first fruits and a taste of the Spirit, who testifies unto us that we are the children of God.

This maundy of remembrance was it that Paul received of the Lord, and delivered to the Corinthians in the eleventh chapter. For though he borrow one property and similitude of the sacrament in the tenth chapter, that in my mind makes neither with us nor against us; albeit, some think that it makes wholly for the exposition of Christ's words, This is my body. But in my mind they are deceived; for the occasion that Paul spake of it in the tenth chapter was this;—The Corinthians had knowledge that all meats were indifferent, and whether it were offered to an idol or not, that the meat was not the worse, and they might lawfully eat of it, whether it were sold them in the shambles, or set before them when they dined and supped in an unfaithful man's house; asking no questions except some man did tell them that it was offered to an idol, and then they should not eat of it, for offending his conscience, that so told them, albeit they were else free and the thing indifferent; this knowledge, because it was not annexed with charity, was the occasion of great offending. For by reason thereof they sat down among the gentiles at their feasts, where they ate in the honour of their idols, and so did not only wound the consciences of their weak brethren, but also committed idolatry indeed; and therefore St. Paul said unto them, My dearly beloved, flee from worshipping of idols; I speak unto them which have discretion. Judge ye what I say. Is not the cup of blessing which we bless, the fellowship of the blood of Christ? Is not the bread which we break, the fellowship of the body of Christ? For we, though we be many, are yet one bread and one body, inasmuch as we are partakers of one bread. Christ called himself bread, and the bread his body: and here Paul calleth us bread, and the bread our body. Now, may you not take Paul that he in this place should directly expound Christ's mind. And that the very exposition of Christ's words, when he said, This is my body, should be that it was the fellowship of his body, as some say, which seeking the key in this place of Paul, lock themselves so fast in, that they can find no way out. For Christ spake those words of his own body, which should be given for us, but the fellowship of Christ's body, or congregation, was not given for us. And so he meant not as Paul here saith, but meant his own body. For as Paul calleth the bread

our body for a certain property, even so doth Christ call it his body for certain other properties. In that the bread was broken, it was Christ's own body; signifying, that as that bread was broken, so should his body be broken for us. In that it was distributed unto his disciples, it was his own body; signifying, that as verily as the bread was distributed unto them, so verily should the death of his body and fruit of his passion be distributed to all faithful folk. In that the bread strengtheneth our bodies, it is his own body; signifying, that as our bodies are strengthened and comforted by bread, so are our souls by the faith in his body-breaking; and likewise of the wine, in that it was so distributed, and so comforteth us and makes us joyful. Furthermore, the bread and wine have another property, for the which it is called our body. For in that the bread is made one bread of many grains or corns, it is our body; signifying, that though we be many, we are made one bread, that is to say, one body. And in that the wine is made one wine of many grapes, it is our body; signifying, that although we are many, yet in Christ and through Christ, we are made one body and members to each other. But in this Christ and Paul agree. For as Paul calleth the bread our body, and us the bread, because of this property, that it is made one of many: even so, doth Christ call it his body, because of the properties before rehearsed.

Furthermore, in this they agree, that as Paul's words must be taken spiritually, for I think there is no man so mad, as to judge that the bread is our body indeed, although in that respect it represents our body—even so must Christ's words be understood spiritually, that in those properties it represents his very body. Now when we come together to receive this bread, then by the receiving of it in the congregation we do openly testify, that we all, who receive it, are one body, professing one God, one faith, and one baptism, and that the body of Christ was broken, and his blood shed, for the remission of our sins. Now, since we so do, we may not company nor sit in the congregation or fellowship of them that offer unto idols and eat before them. For as Paul saith, Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of the devils; ye cannot be partakers of the table of the Lord and of the table of the devils. I would not that you should have fellowship with devils. The heathen who offered unto idols, were the fellowship of devils; and not because they ate the devil's body or drank

the devil's blood, but because they believed and put their confidence in the idol or devil as in their god, and all that were of that faith, had their ceremonies, and gave hearty thanks to their god with that feast which they kept. They came to one place, and brought their meat before the idol and offered it; and with their offering gave unto the devil godly honour. And then they sat down and ate the offering together, giving praise and thanks unto their god, and were one body and one fellowship of the devil; which they testified by eating of that offering before that idol. Now St. Paul reprehends the Corinthians for bearing the gentiles company in eating before the idol. For they knew that the meat was like other meat: and therefore thought themselves free to eat it or leave it. But they perceived not, that that congregation was the fellowship of devils which were there gathered, not for the meat's sake, but for to thank and praise the idol their god in whom they had their confidence. And all that there assembled and there did eat, openly testified that they all were one body, professing one faith in their god, that idol; so Paul rebuked them, for because that by their eating, in that place and fellowship, they testified openly that they were of the devil's body, and rejoiced in the idol their god, in whom they had faith and confidence. And therefore saith Paul, that they cannot both drink the cup of the Lord, testifying him to be their God in whom only they have trust and affiance, and the cup of the devil, testifying the idol to be their god and refuge.

Here you may note, that the meat, and the eating of it in this place and fellowship, is more than the common meat and eating in other places. For else they might lawfully have drunken the devil's cup with them the one day, and the cup of the Lord the next day with his disciples. What was it more? Verily, it was meat, which by the eating of it in that place and fellowship, did testify openly unto all men, that he was their god whose cup they drank, and before whom they ate in that fellowship; and so in their eating they praised and honoured the idol. And therefore, they that had their trust in the living God and in the blood of his Son Christ, might not eat with them. And likewise, it is in the sacrament, the bread and the eating of it in the place and fellowship where it is received, is more than common bread. What is it more? Verily, it is bread, which by the eating of it in that place

and fellowship, doth testify openly unto all men, that he is our very God, whose cup we drink, and before whom we eat in that fellowship, and that we put all our affiance in him and in the blood of his Son Christ Jesus, giving God all honour and infinite thanks for his great love wherewith he loved us, as it is testified, in the blood of his Son, which was shed for our sins. So that in this place and fellowship, may no man eat nor drink with us, but he that is of our faith, and acknowledges the same God that we do.

In the eleventh chapter, Paul makes much mention of the maundy, and describes it to the uttermost. First, he saith, When ye come together in one place, a man cannot eat the Lord's supper. For every man beginneth afore to eat his own supper, and one is hungry and another is drunken. Have ye not houses to eat and drink in? or else despise ye the congregation of God, and shame them that have not; what shall I say unto you? shall I praise you? in this I praise you not. Paul instructed according to Christ's mind, that the Corinthians should come together to eat the Lord's supper. Which lieth not so much in the carnal eating, as in the spiritual; and is greatly desired to be eaten, not by the hunger of the body, but by the hunger of the faithful heart, which is eager to publish the praise of the Lord and give him hearty thanks, and move others to the same; that of many, praise might be given unto our most merciful Father, for the love which he showed us in the blood of his own most dear Son, Christ Jesus; wherewith we are washed from our sins, and surely sealed unto everlasting life. With such hunger did Christ eat the paschal lamb, saying to his disciples, I have inwardly desired to eat this Easter lamb with you before that I suffer. Christ's inward desire was not to fill his belly with his disciples, but he had a spiritual hunger; both to praise his Father with them, for their bodily deliverance out of the land of Egypt, and especially to alter the paschal lamb and memory of the carnal deliverance, into the maundy of joy and thanksgiving for our spiritual deliverance out of the bondage of sin. Insomuch, that when Christ knew that it was his Father's will and pleasure, that he should suffer for our sins, wherein his honour, glory, and praise should be published, then was it a pleasure unto him, to declare unto his disciples that great benefit, unto his Father's praise and glory. And so he did institute, that we should come together and break the bread

in the remembrance of his body-breaking and blood-shedding; and that we should eat it together, rejoicing with each other and declaring his benefits.

Now the Corinthians were fallen from this hunger, and came not together to the intent that God's praise should be published by them in the midst of the congregation, but came to feed their flesh and to make carnal cheer. Insomuch, that the rich would have meat and drink enough, and take such abundance, that they would be drunken, and so made it their own supper and not the Lord's, as Paul saith, and did eat only the bread and meat, and not the body-breaking, as I have before said: and the poor which had not, that is to say, that had no meat to eat, were ashamed and hungry, and so could not rejoice and praise the Lord; by the reason that the delicate fare of the rich, was an occasion for the poor to lament their poverty, and thus the rich did neither praise God themselves, nor suffered the poor to do it, but were an occasion to hinder them.

They should have brought their meat and drink and have divided it with their poor brethren, that they might have been joyful together, and so have given them occasion to be joyful, and rejoice in the Lord with thanksgiving. But they had neither desire to praise God, nor to comfort their neighbour. Their faith was feeble and their charity cold, and they had no regard, but to fill their body and feed their flesh: and so they despised the poor congregation of God, whom they should have honoured for the spirit that was in them, and the favour that God had showed indifferently unto them in the blood of his Son Christ. When Paul perceived that they were thus fleshly minded, and had no mind unto that spiritual maundy which chiefly should there be advertised, he reproved them severely, rehearsing the words of Christ,—That which I gave unto you, I received of the Lord. For the Lord Jesus the same night in the which he was betrayed, took bread, and thanked, and brake it, and said, Take ye and eat ye, this is my body which is broken for you, this do ye in the remembrance of me. After the same manner he took the cup when supper was done, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, this do ye as oft as ye drink it in the remembrance of me. For as oft as ye shall eat this bread and drink of this cup, ye shall show the Lord's death till he come. As though he should say, Ye Corinthians are

much to blame who at this supper seek the food of your flesh. For it was instituted of Christ, not for the intent to nourish the belly, but to strengthen the heart and soul in God. And by this you may know that Christ so meant. For he calls it his body, which is given for you; so that the name itself might testify unto you, that in this supper you should more eat his body which is given for you, (by digesting that in your soul,) than the bread, which by the breaking, and the distributing of it, doth represent his body-breaking, and the distributing thereof unto all that are faithful. And that he so meaneth, is evident by the words following, which say, This do in the remembrance of me: and likewise of the cup. And finally, concluding of both, Paul saith, As often as ye shall eat this bread and drink of this cup, (in this place and fellowship,) ye shall show the Lord's death until he come, praising the Lord for the death of his Son, and exhorting others to do the same, rejoicing in him with infinite thanks. And therefore ye are to blame, which seek only to feed the belly with that which was only instituted to feed the soul. And thereupon it follows:—Wherefore, whosoever doth eat of this bread and drink of this cup unworthily, is guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. He eateth this bread unworthily, who regards not the purpose for which Christ did institute it, who comes not to it with spiritual hunger, to eat through faith his very body, which the bread represents by the breaking and distributing of it; who comes not with a joyful heart, giving God hearty thanks for his deliverance from sin; who does not much more eat in his heart the death of Christ's body, than he does the bread with his mouth.

Now, since the Corinthians only sought their belly and flesh, and forgot God's honour and praise, for which it was instituted, that thanks should be given by the remembrance of his body-breaking for us, they ate it to God's dishonour, and to their neighbour's hinderance, and to their own condemnation; and so for lack of faith were guilty of Christ's body, which (by faith) they should there chiefly have eaten to their soul's health. And therefore it follows:—Let a man therefore examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. This proving or examining of a man's self, is first to think with himself, with what desire he comes unto the maundy, and will eat that bread—whether he be sure that he is the child of God

and in the faith of Christ, and whether his conscience do bear him witness that Christ's body was broken for him; and whether the desire that he hath to praise God, and thank him with a faithful heart in the midst of the brethren, do drive him thitherward? Or else, whether he do it for the meat's sake or to keep the custom? for then were it better that he were away. For he that eateth or drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh his own damnation, because he maketh no difference of the Lord's body. That is, as it is said before, he that regards not the purpose for which it was instituted, and puts no difference between his eating and other eating; for other eating doth only serve the belly, but this eating was instituted and ordained, to serve the soul and inward man. And therefore, he that abuseth it to the flesh, eateth and drinketh his own damnation. And he comes unworthily to the maundy, where the sacrament of Christ's body is eaten; yea, where the body of the Lord is eaten, not carnally with the teeth and belly, but spiritually with the heart and faith.

Upon this follows the text, For this cause many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. If we had truly judged ourselves, we should not have been judged; when we are judged of the Lord, we are chastened because we should not be condemned with the world. Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another. If a man hunger let him eat at home, that ye come not together unto condemnation. For this cause, that is, for lack of good examining of ourselves as is before said, many are weak and sick in the faith, and many asleep, and have lost their faith in Christ's blood, for lack of remembrance of his body-breaking and blood-shedding. Yea, and not that only, but many were weak and sick, even stricken with bodily diseases for abusing the sacrament of his body, eating the bread with their teeth, and not his body with their heart and mind, and peradventure some were slain for it by the stroke of God, who if they had truly judged and examined themselves, for what intent they came thither and why it was instituted, should not have been so judged and chastened of the Lord. For the Lord doth chasten to bring us unto repentance, and to mortify our rebellious members, that we may remember him. Here you may shortly perceive the mind of Paul.

THE HISTORY

OF

DR. ROBERT BARNES.

From the Acts and Monuments of John Fox.

The first bringing up of Dr. Robert Barnes from a child, was in the university of Cambridge, and he was made a novice in the house of the Augustine friars in that place.* He being very apt unto learning, did so profit, that by the help of his friends, he was removed from thence to the university of Lovain, in Brabant, where he remained certain years, and greatly profited in the study of the tongues, and there proceeded doctor in divinity. From thence he returned again into England, and was made prior and master of the house of the Augustines, in Cambridge.

At that time (about 1520) the knowledge of good letters was scarcely entered into the university, all things being full of rudeness and barbarity, saving in very few, which were little known and secret. Whereupon Barnes, having some feeling of better learning and authors, began in his house to read Terence, Plautus, and Cicero; so that what with his industry, pains, and labour, and with the help of Thomas Parnel, his scholar, whom he brought from Lovaine with him, he caused the house shortly to flourish with good letters, and made a great part of the house learned, as master Cambridge, master Field, master Coleman, master Burley, master Coverdale, with divers others of the university, that sojourned there for learning's sake. After these foundations laid, then did he read openly in the house Paul's epistles,

* Dr. Barnes was a native of Lynn, where he was born about the end of the fifteenth century. He passed through the schools at Cambridge in 1514. His history, as given in Fox's Acts and Monuments, is reprinted here on account of the particulars it contains relative to cardinal Wolsey, and the early days of the Reformation, which ought not to be omitted in this collection of the writings of the British Reformers.

and put by Duns and Dorbel,* and yet he was a questionary himself. And because he would have Christ there taught and his holy word, he turned their unsavoury problems and fruitless disputations to other better matter of the holy scriptures, whereby in short space he made divers good divines. The same order of disputation, which he kept in his house, he observed likewise in the university abroad, when he should dispute with any man in the common schools. And the first man that answered doctor Barnes in the scriptures, was master Stafford for his form to be bachelor of divinity, which disputation was marvellous in the sight of the great blind doctors, and joyful to the godly-spirited.

Thus Barnes, what with his reading, disputation, and preaching, became famous and mighty in the scriptures, preaching ever against the bishops and hypocrites, and yet did not see his inward and outward idolatry, which he both taught and maintained, till that good master Bilney, the martyr, with others, converted him wholly unto Christ.

The first sermon that ever he preached of this truth, was the Sunday before Christmas-day, (1525,) at St. Edward's church, belonging to Trinity hall, in Cambridge, by the pease-market; his theme was the epistle of the same Sunday, "Rejoice in the Lord, &c." And he so postilled† the whole epistle, following the scripture and Luther's postil, that for that sermon he was immediately accused of heresy by two fellows of King's hall. Then the godly learned in Christ, both of Pembroke hall, St. John's, Peter house, Queen's college, the King's college, Gonwell hall, and Bene't college, showed themselves, and flocked together in open sight, both in the schools and at open sermons at St. Mary's and at the Augustines, and at other disputations, and then they conferred continually together.

The house that they resorted most commonly unto was the White-horse, which for despite of them, to bring God's word into contempt, was called Germany. This house especially was chosen because of them of St. John's. The King's college and the Queen's college men came in on the back of the house. At this time much trouble began to ensue. The adversaries of Dr. Barnes accused him in the regent house before the vice-chancellor, where his articles were presented with him and

* The divinity of the schools. † Expounded.

received, he promising to make answer at the next convocation, and so it was done. Then Dr. Nottoris, a rank enemy to Christ, moved Dr. Barnes to recant, but he refused so to do, which appears in his book that he made to king Henry VIII. in English, confuting the judgment of cardinal Wolsey, and the residue of the papistical bishops, and so for the time he stood steadfast. And this tragedy continued in Cambridge, one preaching against another, in trying out God's truth, until within six days of Shrovetide. Then suddenly was sent down to Cambridge a serjeant-at-arms, called master Gibson, dwelling in St. Thomas the apostle's in London, who suddenly arrested Dr. Barnes openly in the convocation-house, to make all others afraid; and privily they had determined to make search for Luther's books, and all the German works suddenly.

But good Dr. Forman of the Queen's college sent word immediately thereof, to the chambers of those that were suspected, who were in number thirty persons. But, God be praised, they were conveyed away by the time that the serjeant-at-arms, the vice-chancellor, and the proctors were at every man's chamber, going directly to the place where the books lay, whereby it was perceived that there were some privy spies amongst that small company. That night they studied together, and gave him his answer, which answer Dr. Barnes carried with him to London the next morning, which was the Tuesday before Shrove Sunday, and came on the Wednesday to London, and lay at master Parnel's house, by the stocks. In the morning he was carried by the serjeant-at-arms to cardinal Wolsey, to Westminster, waiting there all day, but could not speak with him till night. Then by reason of Dr. Gardiner, secretary to the cardinal, of whose familiar acquaintance he had been before, and master Fox, master of the wards, he spoke the same night with the cardinal in his chamber of state, kneeling on his knees. Then, said the cardinal to them, "Is this Dr. Barnes your man, that is accused of heresy?"—"Yea, and please your grace, and we trust you shall find him reformable, for he is both well learned and wise."

"What, master doctor, said the cardinal, had you not a sufficient scope in the scriptures to teach the people, but that my golden shoes, my poleaxes, my pillars, my golden cushions, my crosses did so sorely offend you, that you must make us appear

ridiculous amongst the people?* We were jollily that day laughed to scorn. Verily, it was a sermon more fit to be preached on a stage than in a pulpit; for at the last you said, I wear a pair of red gloves, I should say, bloody gloves, said you, that I should not be cold in the midst of my ceremonies." And Dr. Barnes answered, "I spake nothing but the truth out of the scriptures, according to my conscience, and according to the old doctors;" and then he delivered to him six sheets of paper written, to confirm and corroborate his sayings.

He received them, smiling on him, and saying, "We perceive then, that you intend to stand to your articles, and to show your learning."

"Yea," said Barnes, "that I do intend, by God's grace, with your lordship's favour."

He answered, "Such as you are, do bear us and the catholic church little favour. I will ask you a question: whether do you think it more necessary, that I should have all this royalty, because I represent the king's majesty's person in all the high courts of this realm, to the terror and keeping down of all rebellions, treasons, traitors, all the wicked and corrupt members of this commonwealth; or to be as simple as you would have us; to sell all these aforesaid things, and to give it to the poor, and so to put away this majesty of a princely dignity, which is a terror to all the wicked, and to follow your counsel in this behalf?"

He answered, "I think it necessary to be sold and given to the poor. For this is not comely for your calling; nor is the king's majesty maintained by your pomp and poleaxes, but by God, who saith, Kings and their majesties reign and stand by me."

Then answered he, "Lo, master doctors, here is the learned wise man, that you told me of." Then they kneeled down and said, "We desire your grace to be good unto him, for he will be reformable."

* Strype says of cardinal Wolsey, "That outward appearance which he delighted to show himself to the world in, bespake the intolerable loftiness and vanity of his mind. For besides all the state and magnificence of his house and officers which is related by Cavendish, his habit was most gorgeous. It was great that his upper vesture was all of scarlet, or else of fine crimson taffeta or crimson satin ingrained; he wore red gloves as well as a red hat; but greater still that he wore shoes of silver and gilt, set with pearls and precious stones; having also two crosses of silver, and two poll-axes and pillars of silver and gilt, and golden cushions carried before him.—*Memorials*, i. p. 184.

Then said he, "Stand you up; for your sakes and the university, we will be good unto him. How say you, master doctor, do you not know that I am Legatus de latere,* and that I am able to dispense in all matters concerning religion within this realm, as much as the pope may?" He said, "I know it to be so."

"Will you then be ruled by us, and we will do all things for your honesty, and for the honesty of the university."

He answered, "I thank your grace for your good will; I will stick to the holy scripture, and to God's book, according to the simple talent that God hath lent me."

"Answer well," said he, "thou shalt have thy learning tried to the uttermost, and thou shalt have the law."

Then Dr. Barnes required that he might have justice with equity, and forthwith he should have gone to the Tower, but that Gardiner and Fox became his sureties that night, and so he came home to master Parnel's house again, and that night fell to writing again and slept not, master Coverdale, master Goodwin, and master Field being his writers; and in the morning he came to York-place to Gardiner and Fox, and by-and-by he was committed to the serjeant-at-arms to bring him into the chapter-house at Westminster before the bishops and the abbot of Westminster, called Islip.

The same time when Dr. Barnes should appear before the cardinal, there were five Stilliard-men† to be examined for Luther's books and Lollardy; but after they spied Barnes, they set the others aside, and asked the serjeant-at-arms what was his errand. He said he had brought one Dr. Barnes to be examined of heresy, and presented both his articles and his accusers. Then immediately after a little talk, they swore him, and laid his articles to him. Who, like as he answered the cardinal before, so said he unto them; and then he offered the book of his probations unto them. Who asked him, whether he had another for himself, and he said, "Yea;" showing it unto them. Who then took it from him, and said they should have no leisure to dispute with him at that present, for other affairs of the king's majesty, which they had to do, and therefore bade him

* The pope's legate.

† German merchants, called Easterlings or merchants of the Stilliard, who dwelt at the place now called the Steel-yard in Thames-street, and were allowed particular privileges.

stand aside. Then they called the Stilliard-men again, one by one, and when they were examined, they called forth the master of the Fleet prison, and they were all committed to the Fleet. Then they called Dr. Barnes again, and asked him whether he would subscribe to his articles or no; he subscribed willingly; and they committed him and Parnel to the Fleet with the others. There they remained, till Saturday morning, and the warden of the Fleet was commanded that no man should speak with him.

On the Saturday he came again before them into the chapter-house, and there with the Stilliard-men remained till five o'clock at night. And after long disputations, threatenings and scornings, about five o'clock at night they called him, to know whether he would abjure or burn. He was then in a great agony, and thought rather to burn than to abjure. But then was he sent again to have the counsel of Gardiner and Fox, and they persuaded him rather to abjure than to burn, because, they said, he should do more in time to come, and with divers other persuasions, that were mighty in the sight of reason and foolish flesh. Upon that, kneeling upon his knees, he consented to abjure, and the abjuration being put in his hand, he abjured as it was there written, and then he subscribed with his own hand; and yet they would scarcely receive him into the bosom of the church, as they termed it. Then they put him to an oath, and charged him to execute, do, and fulfil all that they commanded him, and he promised so to do.

Then they commanded the warden of the Fleet to carry him and his fellows to the place from whence he came, and to be kept in close prison, and in the morning to provide five fagots for Dr. Barnes and the four Stilliard-men. The fifth Stilliard-man was commanded to have a taper of five pounds weight to be provided for him, to offer to the rood of Northen in Paul's,* and all these things to be ready by eight of the clock in the morning; and that he with all that he could collect with bills and gleaves, and the knight marshal with all his tipstaves that he could gather, should bring them to Paul's and conduct them home again. In the morning they were all ready by their hour appointed in Paul's church, the church being so full that no man could get in. The cardinal had a scaffold made on the top of the stairs for himself, with six and thirty abbots, mitred priors, and bishops,

* A crucifix or representation of the crucifixion at the north door of St. Paul's.

and he in his whole pomp mitred, which Barnes spake against, sat there enthroned, his chaplains and spiritual doctors in gowns of damask and satin, and he himself in purple, (scarlet,) even like a bloody antichrist. And there was a new pulpit erected on the top of the stairs also, for the bishop of Rochester to preach against Luther and Dr. Barnes; and great baskets full of books standing before them within the rails, which were commanded, after the great fire was made afore the rood of Northen, there to be burned, and these heretics after the sermon to go thrice about the fire and to cast in their fagots.

Now while the sermon was a doing, Dr. Barnes and the Stilliard-men were commanded to kneel down and ask God forgiveness, the catholic church, and the cardinal's grace; and after that, he was commanded at the end of the sermon to declare that he was more charitably handled than he deserved, or was worthy, his heresies were so horrible and so detestable, and once again he kneeled down on his knees, desiring the people to forgive and to pray for him; and so the cardinal departed under a canopy with all his mitred men with him, till he came to the second gate of Paul's, and then he took his mule, and the mitred men came back again. Then these poor men, being commanded to come down from the stage, (whereon the sweepers use to stand when they sweep the church), the bishops sat them down again, and commanded the knight marshal and the warden of the Fleet, with their company, to carry them about the fire, and so were they brought to the bishops, and there for absolution kneeled down. Rochester then stood up and declared unto the people, how many days of pardon and forgiveness of sins they had for being at that sermon, and there absolved Dr. Barnes with the others, and showed the people that they were received into the church again.

This done, the warden of the Fleet and the knight marshal were commanded to have them to the Fleet again, and were charged that they should have the liberty of the Fleet, as other prisoners had, and that their friends might resort unto them, and there to remain till the lord cardinal's pleasure was known.

After that Barnes had continued there in the Fleet the space of half a year, at length being delivered, he was committed to be a free prisoner at the Austin-friars in London. When those caterpillars and bloody men had there undermined him, they

complained again to the lord cardinal. Whereupon he was removed to the Austin-friars of Northampton, there to be burned. Yet he himself understanding nothing thereof, but supposing still, that he should there remain and continue in free prison, at last, one master Horne, who had brought him up, and was his special friend, having intelligence of the writ, which should shortly be sent down to burn him, gave him counsel to feign himself to be in despair—and that he should write a letter to the cardinal and leave it on his table where he lay, and a paper by, to declare whither he was gone to drown himself, and to leave his clothes in the same place; and there another letter to be left to the mayor of the town to search for him in the water, because he had a letter written in parchment about his neck, closed in wax for the cardinal, which should teach all men to beware by his example. Upon this, they were seven days in searching for him, but he was conveyed to London in a poor man's apparel, and so tarried not there, but took shipping and went by sea to Antwerp, and so to Luther, and there fell to study, till he had made an answer to all the bishops of the realm and had made a book entitled, The acts of the Roman pontiffs; and another book, with a supplication to king Henry. Immediately it was told the cardinal that he was drowned, and he said, "Perish his memory with his name." But this did light upon himself shortly after, who wretchedly died at Leicester.

In the same season Dr. Barnes was made strong in Christ, and got favour both of the learned in Christ, and foreign princes in Germany, and was great with Luther, Melancthon, Pomeranus, Justus Jonas, Hegendorphinus, and Æpinus, and with the duke of Saxony, and with the king of Denmark, which king of Denmark in the time of More and Stokesley sent him with the Lubeckers, as an ambassador to king Henry the eighth.* He lay with the Lubeck's chancellor at the Stilliard.

Sir Thomas More, then lord chancellor, would fain have entrapped him, but the king would not let him, for Cromwell was his great friend. And ere he went, the Lubeckers and he disputed with the bishops of this realm in defence of the truth, and so he departed again, without restraint, with the Lubeckers. After

* Seckendorf in his history of Lutheranism mentions Barnes's residence at Wittemberg. He was employed in several negotiations with the German princes, while Cromwell was in power.

his going again to Wittenberg to the duke of Saxony, and to Luther,* he remained there to set forward his works in print that he had begun, from whence he returned again in the beginning of the reign of queen Anne (Boleyn), as others did, and he continued a faithful preacher in this city, being all her time well entertained and promoted. After that he was sent ambassador by king Henry the eighth to the duke of Cleves, for the marriage of the lady Ann of Cleves, between the king and her, and was well accepted in that embassy and in all his doings, until the time that Stephen Gardiner came out of France; but after he came, neither religion prospered, nor the queen's majesty, nor Cromwell, nor the preachers. For after the marriage of the lady Ann of Cleves, he never ceased until he had grafted the marriage in another stock, by the occasion whereof he began his bloody broil.

For not long after, Dr. Barnes with two of his brethren in faith and tribulation, namely, master Garret, curate in Honey-lane in London, and master Hierome, vicar of Stepney, were apprehended and carried before the king's majesty to Hampton-court, and there he was examined. Where the king's majesty, seeking the means of his safety, to bring Winchester and him agreed, at Winchester's request granted him leave to go home with the bishop to confer with him; and so he did. But as it happened, they not agreeing, Gardiner and his compartners sought by all subtle means, how to entangle and to entrap them in farther danger, which not long after was brought to pass. By certain complaints made to the king of them, they were enjoined to preach three sermons, the next Easter, at the Spital.

The occasion whereof, as I find it reported by Stephen Gardiner in his preface against George Joy, I will discourse more at large. The said Stephen Gardiner hearing that the said Barnes, Hierome, and Garret should preach the Lent following, anno 1541, at Paul's cross; to stop the course of their doctrine, sent his chaplain to the bishop of London, the Saturday before the first Sunday in Lent, to have a place for him to preach at Paul's. Which was granted to him, and time appointed that he should preach the Sunday following, which should be on the morrow; which Sunday was before appointed for Barnes to occupy that room. Gardiner, therefore, determining to declare the gospel

* At Wittemberg in Germany

of that Sunday containing the devil's three temptations, began amongst other things to note the abuse of scripture amongst some, as the devil abused it to Christ, and so alluding to the temptation of the devil, wherein he alleged the scripture against Christ, to cast himself downward, and that he should take no hurt, he inferred thereupon, saying,

"Now-a-days, the devil tempteth the world, and biddeth them to cast themselves backward. There is no forward in the new teaching, but all backward. Now, the devil teacheth, come back from fasting, come back from praying, come back from confession, come back from weeping for thy sins, and all is backward; insomuch that men must now learn to say their Pater-noster (Lord's prayer) backward. For where we said, forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors, now it is, As thou forgavest our debts, so I will forgive my debtors, and so God must forgive first; and all, I say, is turned backward," &c. And amongst other things, moreover, he noted the devil's craft and shift in deceiving man: who, envying his felicity, and therefore coveting to have man idle, and void of good works, and to be led in that idleness, with a vain hope to live merrily at his pleasure here, and yet to have heaven at the last, hath for that purpose procured out pardons from Rome, wherein heaven was sold for a little money, and to retail that merchandise, the devil used friars for his ministers.* "Now they be gone with all their trumpery, but the devil is not yet gone, &c. And now that the devil perceiveth that it can no longer be borne, to buy and sell heaven by the friars, he hath excogitated to offer heaven without works for it, so freely, that men shall not need to work at all for heaven, whatsoever opportunity they have to work; marry, if they will have any higher place in heaven, God will leave no work unrewarded; but as to be in heaven needs no work at all, but 'only belief, only, only,' and nothing else," &c.

This sermon of Stephen Winchester finished, Dr. Barnes, who was put off from that Sunday, had his day appointed, which was the third Sunday next ensuing, to make his sermon; who taking the same text of the gospel which Gardiner had

* At that time Gardiner opposed the pope's supremacy and usurpations, though he supported most of the doctrines of the church of Rome.

done before, was on the contrary side no less vehement in setting forward the true doctrine of christian religion, than Winchester had been before in plucking men backward from truth to lies, from sincerity to hypocrisy, from religion to superstition, from Christ to antichrist. In the process of which sermon, he, proceeding and calling out Stephen Gardiner by name to answer him, alluding in a pleasant allegory to a cock fight, termed the said Gardiner to be a fighting cock, and himself to be another, but the garden cock, he said, lacked good spurs; objecting moreover to the said Gardiner, and opposing him in his grammar rules; thus saying, that if he had answered him in the schools, as he had there preached at the cross, he would have given him six stripes. Declaring further what evil herbs this Gardiner had set in the garden of God's scripture, &c.*

Finally, with this sermon Gardiner was so displeased that he immediately went to the king to complain, showing how he, being a bishop and a prelate of the realm, was handled and reviled at Paul's cross.

Whereupon the king, giving too much ear to Gardiner's grief, was earnestly incensed against Barnes, and with many high words rebuked his doings in his privy closet, having with him the earl of Southampton who was the lord Wriothesly, and the master of the horse, who was Anthony Brown, Dr. Cocks, and Dr. Robinson. Unto whom, when Barnes had submitted himself; "Nay," said the king, "yield thee not to me, I am a mortal man," and therewith rising up, and turning to the sacrament, and putting off his bonnet, said, "Yonder is the master of us all, the author of truth, yield in truth to him, and that truth will I defend, and otherwise yield thee not unto me." Much ado there was, and great matter laid against Barnes. In conclusion, this order was taken, that Barnes should go apart with Winchester, to confer and commune together of their doctrine, certain witnesses being thereunto appointed, to be as indifferent hearers, of whom the one was Dr. Cocks, the other was Dr. Robinson, with two others also to them assigned, who should be reporters to the king of the disputation. At the first entry of which talk, Gardiner, forgiving him, as he saith, all

* This method of playing upon words was very common and highly approved in those days.

that was past, offered him the choice, whether he would answer or oppose—which was to be on the Friday after that Barnes had preached. The question propounded between them, by Gardiner's narration was this; Whether a man could do any thing good or acceptable before the grace of justification, or not? Which question rose upon a certain contention which had been between them before. For Barnes had affirmed, that albeit God requireth of us to forgive our neighbour, to obtain forgiveness of him; yet he said, that God must forgive us first, before we forgive our neighbour; for else to forgive our neighbour were sin, by the text which saith, All that is not of faith is sin, &c. Thus the matter being propounded, Gardiner, to prove the contrary, came forth with two or three arguments: to the which arguments Gardiner said, that Barnes could not answer, but desired to be spared that night, and the next morning he would answer his arguments. In the morning, Gardiner, with the hearers, being again assembled, Dr. Barnes, according to the appointment, was present, who then went about to assail his arguments. To his solutions Gardiner again replied. And thus continued they in this altercation by the space of two hours. This done, the king being advertised of the conclusion of this matter between Barnes and Winchester, was content that Barnes should repair to the bishop's house at London the Monday following. Which he did, with a certain other companion joined unto him. Who he was, Winchester there does not express, only he saith that it was neither Hierome, nor Garret. In this next meeting between Barnes and the bishop, upon the foresaid Monday, the said bishop studying to instruct Barnes, uttered to him certain articles or conclusions, to the number of ten.

These articles, for so much as they are sufficiently answered and replied unto by George Joy, in his joinder and rejoinder against Winchester, I shall not need to swell this work therewith, but only refer the reader to the books aforesaid, where he may see matter enough to answer to these popish articles.*

* George Joy assisted Tindal in his translation of the scriptures. The following extract is from the commencement of his confutation of Gardiner's Articles.

"I chanced upon certain articles, entitled to the bishop of Winchester, called Stephen Gardiner, which were written against Dr. Barnes and his two followers, burnt 1541, for preaching only faith to justify. By these his articles, Winchester would prove that works must

I told you before, how the king was contented that Barnes should resort to the house of the bishop of Winchester, to be trained and directed by the bishop: which Barnes then hearing the talk of the people, and having also conference with certain learned men, within two days after his coming to the bishop's house, waxed weary thereof, and so, coming to the bishop, signified unto him, that if he would take him as one that came to confer, he would come still, but else he would come no more, and so wholly gave over the bishop.

This being known unto the king, through sinister complaints of popish sycophants, Barnes again was sent for, and convened before the king; who, being grievously incensed against him, enjoined both him, Hierome, and Garret, at the solemn Easter sermons at St. Mary Spital, openly in writing to revoke the doctrine which they before had taught. At which sermon, Stephen Gardiner himself was present to hear their recantation.

First, Dr. Barnes, according to his promise made to the king, solemnly and formally began to make his recantation; which done, he with much circumstance and obtestation called upon the bishop, and asking of him forgiveness, required him in token

justify, that is to say, with our works we must merit the remission of our sins. Which doctrine, as it is contrary to God's word, so is it injurious to Christ's blood. Whose godly name is ONE alone, for all sufficient; even that same precious hid treasure in the gospel, in whom, saith Paul, are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden. For in him dwelleth the most perfect fulness of God verily; and in him are we complete, even perfectly justified, without any interweaving of Winchester's works. This thing do I tell you, saith Paul, lest any man, as now would Winchester, deceive you with his apparent popish persuasions. This full justification, by only faith, Paul expresses clearly in these words also: 'This our everlasting, living priest and intercessor, Christ, abideth for ever unto this end, even absolutely, fully, and perfectly, without any lack or breach, to save all them, that through him by faith come to God the Father.' Here are we taught, Christ to have an everlasting priesthood, to save perfectly and sufficiently, through our faith only, and that he ever liveth unto this same end. Wherefore, for the defence of our so plenteous and perfect redemption, and for the rich favour and mercy of our heavenly Father, and free forgiveness in Christ's passion, through our faith only, and that the glory of his grace, whereby he hath made us his dearly beloved chosen children, through his beloved Son, should be praised, by whom we have redemption through his blood, even the remission of sins, according to the riches of his so plenteous grace, unable to be diminished; to defend this my Lord God's glory, I say, and to warn the simple unlearned, that they be not deceived by such blasphemous bishop's articles, I shall by God's help justly by his word clearly confute them, although he yet teach and preach them unto his own damnation, and deceiving of as many as believe him."

of a grant to hold up his hand; to the intent that he, there openly declaring his charity before the world, the bishop also would declare his charity in like manner. Which, when the bishop refused to do at the first, as he was required, Barnes again called for it, desiring him to show his charity, and to hold up his hand. Which when he had done with much ado, wagging his finger a little, then Barnes entering to his sermon, after his prayer made, began the process of a matter, preaching contrary to that which before he had recanted. Insomuch, that the mayor, when the sermon was finished, sitting with the bishop of Winchester, asked him whether he should from the pulpit send him to prison, to be forthcoming for that his bold preaching contrary to his recantation. The like also did Hierome, and Garret after him.

The king had appointed before certain persons to make report of the sermons. Besides them there was one, who writing to a friend of his in the court, in the favour of these preachers, declared how they had all handled the matter, both to satisfy the recantation, and also in the same sermons to utter the truth, that it might spread without being hindered by the world. Wherefore, partly by these reporters, and partly by the negligent looking to this letter, which came to the lord Cromwell's hands, saith Gardiner, Barnes with his other fellows were apprehended and committed to the Tower. Stephen Gardiner, in his book written against George Joy, would needs clear himself, that he was in no part nor cause of their casting into the Tower, and gives this reason for it, that he had then no access, nor had after, so long as Cromwell's time lasted, to the king's secret counsel; yet, notwithstanding, the said Gardiner cannot persuade us to the contrary, but that his private complaining to the king, and his secret whisperings in his friends' ears, and his other workings by his factors about the king, was a great sparkle to set their fagots on fire.

Thus then Barnes, Hierome, and Garret, being committed to the Tower after Easter, there remained till the 30th day of July, which was two days after the death of the lord Cromwell. Then ensued process against them by the king's council in parliament, to the which process Gardiner confesses that he was privy amongst the rest. Whereupon, all those three good saints of God, the 30th day of July, not coming to any answer,

nor yet knowing any cause of their condemnation, without any public hearing, were brought together from the Tower to Smithfield,* where they preparing themselves to the fire, had there at the stake divers and sundry exhortations, among whom Dr. Barnes first began with this protestation following:

"I am come hither to be burned as a heretic, and you shall hear my belief, whereby you shall perceive what erroneous opinions I hold. God I take to record, I never, to my knowledge, taught any erroneous doctrine, but only those things which scripture led me unto, and that in my sermons I never maintained any error, neither moved nor gave occasion of any insurrection. Although I have been slandered to preach that our lady was but a saffron bag, which I utterly protest before God that I never meant it, nor preached it; but all my study and diligence hath been utterly to confound and confute all men of that doctrine, as are those who deny that our Saviour Christ did take any flesh of the blessed virgin Mary, which sects I detest and abhor. And in this place there have been burned some of them, whom I never favoured nor maintained, but with all diligence ever more did I study to set forth the glory of God, the obedience to our sovereign lord the king, and the true and sincere religion of Christ—and now hearken to my faith.

"I believe in the holy and blessed Trinity, three persons and one God, that created and made all the world, and that this blessed Trinity sent down the second person Jesus Christ into the womb of the most blessed and purest virgin Mary. And here bear my record, that I do utterly condemn that abominable and detestable opinion which saith that Christ took no flesh

* Stowe, in his annals, A.D. 1541, says, "The 30th of July were drawn from the Tower of London to West Smithfield, Robert Barnes, doctor of divinity, T. Gerard, parson of Honey-lane, and William Jerome, vicar of Stepenheath, batchelors in divinity. Also Edward Powell, Thomas Able, and Richard Fetherstone, all three doctors. The first three were drawn to a stake and there burned. The other three were drawn to a gallows and there hanged, headed, and quartered. The three first as appeareth in their attainders were executed for divers heresies. The last three for treason, as in their attainder was mentioned, namely, for denying the king's supremacy, and affirming the marriage with queen Catharine to be good, of the which argument doctor Powell wrote a book."

It is related that the three Romanists considered their sufferings much aggravated by being drawn to execution on the same sledges as heretics! These dreadful and barbarous executions show the extent to which the conflicts of the parties of that reign proceeded.

of the virgin. For I believe that without man's will or power he was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and took flesh of her, and that he suffered hunger, thirst, cold, and other passions of our body, sin excepted; according to the saying of St. Peter, he was made in all things like to his brethren, except sin. And I believe that this his death and passion, was the sufficient ransom for the sin of all the world. And I believe that through his death he overcame sin, death, and hell, and that there is none other satisfaction unto the Father, but this, his death and passion only, and that no work of man did deserve any thing of God, but only his passion, as touching our justification. For I know the best work that ever I did is impure and imperfect." And with this he cast abroad his hands, and desired God to forgive him his trespasses. "For although perchance," said he, "you know nothing of me, yet do I confess, that my thoughts and cogitations are innumerable; wherefore I beseech thee, O Lord, not to enter into judgment with me; according to the saying of the prophet David, Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord! And in another place, Lord, if thou straitly mark our iniquities, who is able to abide thy judgment? Wherefore, I trust in no good work that ever I did, but only in the death of Christ. I do not doubt but through him to inherit the kingdom of heaven. Take me not here, that I speak against good works, for they are to be done, and verily they that do them not shall never come into the kingdom of God. We must do them, because they are commanded us of God, to show and set forth our profession, not to deserve or merit, for that is only the death of Christ.

"I believe that there is a holy church, and a company of all them that do profess Christ; and that all that have suffered and confessed his name, are saints; and that all they do praise and laud God in heaven, more than I, or any man's tongue can express, and I have always spoken reverently, and praised them, as much as scripture willed me to do. And that our lady, I say, was a virgin immaculate and undefiled, and that she is the most pure virgin that ever God created, and a vessel elect of God, of whom Christ should be born." Then said master sheriff, "You have said well of her before." And being afraid that master sheriff had been or should be grieved with any thing that he should say, he said, "Master sheriff, if I speak

any thing that you will me not, do no more, but beckon me with your hand, and I will straightway hold my peace, for I will not be disobedient in any thing, but will obey."

Then there was one that asked him his opinion of praying to saints. Then said he; "Now of saints you shall hear my opinion: I have said before somewhat I think of them; how that I believe they are in heaven with God, and that they are worthy of all the honour, that scripture willeth them to have. But, I say, throughout all scripture we are not commanded to pray to any saints. Therefore I neither can nor will preach to you, that saints ought to be prayed unto; for then should I preach unto you a doctrine of mine own head. Notwithstanding, whether they pray for us or no, that I refer to God. And if saints do pray for us, then I trust to pray for you within this half hour, master sheriff, and for every christian man living in the faith of Christ, and dying in the same, as a saint. Wherefore, if the dead may pray for the quick, I will surely pray for you."

"Well, have you any thing more to say?" Then spake he to master sheriff and said, "Have you any articles against me for the which I am condemned?" And the sheriff answered, "No." Then said he, "Is there here any man else that knoweth wherefore I die, or that by my preaching hath taken any error? Let them now speak and I will make them answer." And no man answered. "Then," said he, "well, I am condemned by the law to die, and as I understand, by an act of parliament, but wherefore I cannot tell, but belike for heresy, for we are like to burn.* But they that have been the occasion of it, I pray God forgive them, as I would be forgiven myself. And Dr. Stephen, bishop of Winchester that now is, if he have sought or wrought this my death, either by word or deed, I pray God forgive him, as heartily, as freely, as charitably, and without feigning, as ever Christ forgave them that put him to death.

"And if any of the council, or any others have sought or wrought it through malice or ignorance, I pray God forgive their ignorance, and illuminate their eyes that they may see, and ask mercy for it. I beseech you all to pray for the king's grace, as I have done ever since I was in prison, and do now,

* The Romanists who suffered at the same time for denying the king's supremacy were hanged. Barnes and his companions were sentenced under the act of six articles. See the life of Cranmer.

that God may give him prosperity, and that he may long reign among you, and after him that godly prince, Edward, may so reign, that he may finish those things that his father hath begun. I have been reported to be a preacher of sedition and disobedience unto the king's majesty; but here I say to you, that you all are bound by the commandment of God to obey your prince with all humility, and with all your heart, yea, not so much as in a look to show yourselves disobedient unto him, and that not only for fear of the sword, but also for conscience sake before God. Yea, and I say farther, if the king should command you any thing against God's law, if it be in your power to resist him, yet may you not do it."

Then spake he to the sheriff and said, "Master sheriff, I require you on God's behalf, to have me commended unto the king's grace, and to show him that I require of his grace these five requests; first, that where his grace hath received into his hand all the goods and substance of the abbeys——" Then the sheriff desired him to stop there. He answered, "Master sheriff, I warrant you I will speak no harm, for I know it is well done that all such superstition be wholly taken away, and the king's grace hath well done in taking it away. But his grace is made a whole king, and obeyed in his realm as a king, which neither his father, neither any of those his ancestors, that reigned before him, ever had, and that through the preaching of us and such other wretches as we are, which always have applied our whole studies, and given ourselves for the setting forth of the same; and this is now our reward! Well, it maketh no matter. Now he reigneth among you; I pray God, long may he live and reign among you. Would to God, it might please his grace to bestow the said goods, or some of them, to the comfort of his poor subjects, which surely have great need of them.

"The second, that I desire of his grace, is, that he will see that matrimony be had in more reverence than it is; and that men, for every light cause invented, cast not off their wives, and live in adultery and fornication; and that those, that are not married should not live abominably, following the filthy lusts of the flesh.

"The third, that the abominable swearers may be punished and straitly looked upon; for the vengeance of God will come

on them for their mischievous oaths." Then desired he master Pope to have him commended to master Edgar, and to desire him for the dear blood of Jesus Christ, that he would leave that abominable swearing which he used; for surely, except he did forsake it, he would come to some mischievous end.

"The fourth, that his grace would set forth Christ's true religion, and seeing he hath begun, go forward and make an end; for many things have been done, but much more is to do; and that it would please his grace to look on God's word himself, for that it hath been obscured with many traditions, invented of our own brains.—Now," said he, "How many petitions have I spoken of?" And the people said, "Four."—"Well," said he, "even these four are sufficient, which I desire you, that the king's grace may be certified of, and say, that I most humbly desire him to look earnestly upon them; and that his grace take heed that he be not deceived with false preachers and teachers, and evil counsel, for Christ saith, that such false prophets shall come in lambs' skins."

Then desired he all men to forgive him, and if he had said any evil at any time unadvisedly, whereby he had offended any man, or given any occasion of evil, that they would forgive it him, and amend that evil they took of him, and to bear him witness that he detested and abhorred all evil opinions and doctrines against the word of God, and that he died in the faith of Jesus Christ, by whom he doubted not but to be saved. And with those words he desired them all to pray for him, and then he turned him about, and put off his clothes, making him ready to the fire, patiently there to take his death.

And so after prayer made by him and his two fellow martyrs, wherein most effectually they desired the Lord Jesus to be their comfort and consolation in this their affliction, and to establish them with perfect faith, constancy, and patience through the Holy Ghost, they taking themselves by the hands, and kissing one another, quietly and humbly offered themselves to the hands of the tormentors, and so took their death both christianly and constantly, with such patience as might well testify the goodness of their cause, and the quiet of their conscience.*

* "One Standish, a fellow of Whittington college, a papist, wrote a scurrilous book against Barnes, refuting what he had said immediately before his burning, which his friend and old acquaintance Coverdale answered, and justified the deceased martyr." *Strype, Memorials*, i. 570.

The works of Barnes are not numerous. He wrote in Latin the lives of the popes, and compiled in the same language "The Principal Articles of the Christian Faith," set forth from the sacred scriptures and the writings of the fathers. These Latin works were written during his abode at Wittenberg. Barnes indeed may be considered as a principal connecting link between the English and the Lutheran Reformers. He had much of the bold, uncompromising spirit of Luther, with whom he had been an inmate. Luther wrote a preface to the lives of the popes, which is reprinted by Seckendorf. (Hist. Luth. Ind. iii.)

The doctrines of Barnes may be collected from the titles of "The Principal Articles of the Christian Faith," which were printed with a preface by Pomeranus. 1. Faith alone justifies. 2. Christ has satisfied not only for original sin, but for all sins. 3. The Commandments of God cannot be kept by our own strength. 4. Free-will of its own strength can do nothing but sin. 5. The righteous sin, even in good works. 6. The characteristics of the true church set forth. 7. The power of the keys (Matt. xvi. 19) depends upon the word of God, not the power of men. 8. Councils may err. 9. The communion is to be given under both kinds. 10. Human ordinances do not bind the conscience. 11. Auricular confession is not necessary to salvation. 12. Priests may lawfully marry. 13. Monks are not more holy than laymen, on account of their habits and vows. 14. Christian fasting consists not in abstinence from particular kinds of food. 15. Christians keep holy, or worship God, every day, not merely on the seventh. 16. Unjust papal excommunications do not hurt those against whom they are directed. 17. The real body of Christ is in the sacrament of the altar. 18. Saints are not to be invoked as mediators. 19. He exposes the errors of the Romish mass. On all the above subjects he adduced the words of scripture, or the writings of the fathers, or both, in support of his arguments.

In English, his principal work is a supplication to king Henry VIII. against the proceedings of the Romish prelates. In this work he treats upon a variety of doctrinal subjects, with an interesting but prolix account of the manner in which he was persecuted by the ecclesiastics, and his examinations before cardinal Wolsey. This work is divided into the following

chapters or divisions, which embrace the greater part of the heads of doctrine he had set forth in Latin, but considerably enlarged. A supplication to king Henry VIII. His (Barnes) articles condemned by popish bishops,—The disputation between the bishops and him.—Faith only justifieth before God.—What the church is, and who are thereof; and whereby men may know her.—Another declaration of the church wherein he answereth M. More.—What the keys of the church are, and to whom they were given.—Freewill of man, after the fall of Adam, of his own natural strength, can do nothing but sin before God.—That it is lawful for all manner of men to read the holy scripture.—That men's constitutions (decrees) which are not grounded in scripture, bind not the conscience of man under the pain of deadly sin.—That all men are bound to receive the holy communion in both kinds, under the pain of deadly sin.—That by God's word it is lawful for priests that have not the gift of chastity, to marry wives.—That it is against the holy scripture to honour images and to pray to saints.

In the folio edition of Barnes's works printed by Day, some additions are appended to the preceding treatises, so that the whole of his Latin work on the articles of the christian faith is given to the English reader.

Of these pieces, the treatise on justification is the most suitable for the present collection. It clearly shows how much this early British reformer had profited by his intercourse with the German protestants, according to the account given by his fellow-collegian Bale, who mentions his escape to the continent, and that he "took refuge with Luther in Germany; where, having remained for some years in friendship with that great reformer, and many other lovers of true piety, he again returned into England. From that time he with great firmness and sincerity maintained the justification of a sinner, through faith alone in the work of Christ our Saviour, against the ungodly preachers of human works: this he did both in sermons and writings; resting on the promise that the head of the old serpent would be bruised by the holy Seed alone. Satan therefore speedily devised new machinations against him through the medium of the insidious prelates. Under whose tyranny, although he seemed to sink, like one vanquished; yet now the

departed saint triumphantly reigns in glory, and is made more than conqueror over his ungodly survivors."

The confidence with which Barnes contended for the faith "delivered to the saints," is thus expressed by himself in the statement of his opinions condemned by the Romanists. "And where my lord cardinal said he would spend so much money to have me again, I have great marvel of it. What can they make of me? I am a simple poor wretch, and worth no man's money in the world, saving theirs, not the tenth penny that they will give for me. And to burn me, or to destroy me, cannot so greatly profit them. For when I am dead, the sun and the moon, the stars and the elements, water and fire, yea and also stones, shall defend this cause against them rather than the verity should perish."

A

TREATISE ON JUSTIFICATION.

[This Tract is appended to a Supplication unto the most gracious prince, king Henry VIII. by Robert Barnes, D.D.]

ONLY FAITH JUSTIFIETH BEFORE GOD.

If your grace do not take upon you to hear the disputation and the probation of this article, out of the ground of the holy scripture, my lords the bishops will condemn it, before they read it, as their manner is to do with all things that please them not, and which they understand not; and then cry they, "Heresy, heresy, a heretic, a heretic, he ought not to be heard, for his matters are condemned by the church, and by his holy fathers, and by all long customs, and by all manner of laws."

Unto whom, with your grace's favour, I make this answer; I would know of them, if all these things that they have reckoned, can overcome Christ, and his holy word, or set the Holy Ghost to school? And if they cannot, why should not I then be heard, who do require it in the name of Christ? and also bring for me his holy word, and the holy fathers, which have understood God's word, as I do? Therefore, though they will not hear me, yet must they needs hear them. In holy scripture, Christ is nothing else but a Saviour, a Redeemer, a Justifier, and a perfect peace-maker between God and man. This testimony did the angel give of him in these words, He shall save his people from their sins. And also St. Paul, Christ is made our righteousness, our satisfaction, and our redemption. Moreover, the prophet witnesses the same, saying, For the wretchedness of my people, have I stricken him; so that here have we Christ with his properties.

Now, if we will truly confess Christ, then must we grant with our hearts, that Christ is all our justice, all our

redemption, all our wisdom, all our holiness, all alone the purchaser of grace, alone the peace-maker between God and man. Briefly, all goodness that we have, that it is of him, by him, and for his sake only. And that we have need of nothing towards our salvation, but of him only, and we desire no other salvation, nor any other satisfaction, nor any help of any other creature, either heavenly or earthly, but of him only; for as St. Peter saith, There is no other name given unto men, wherein they must be saved. And also St. Paul saith, By him are all that believe justified from all things. Moreover, St. John witnesses the same, in these words; He it is that hath obtained grace for our sins. And in another place; He sent his Son to make agreement for our sins.

Now, my lords, here have you Christ, and his very nature full and whole. And he that denies any thing, or any part of these things, or takes any part of them, and applies them, or gives the glory of them to any other person, than to Christ only, the same man robs Christ of his honour, and denies Christ, and is very antichrist. Wherefore, my lords, First, What say you to this, and unto the properties of Christ? If you grant them, then are we at a point. For they prove that faith in Jesus Christ only justifieth before God. Secondly, If you deny it, as I am sure you will, for you had rather deny your creed, than grant it, how can you then avoid, but that you are the very antichrist of whom St. John speaks? For now have we tried your spirits, that they be not of God, for you deny Christ, that is, you deny the very nature and property of Christ. You grant the name; but you deny the virtue. You grant that he descended from heaven; but you deny the profit thereof. For he descended for our health,* this you deny; and yet it is your creed. You grant that he was born; but you deny the purpose. You grant that he is risen from death; but you deny the profit thereof, for he rose to justify us. You grant that he is a Saviour; but you deny that he is alone the Saviour. I pray you, wherefore was he born? Was it to justify us in part, to redeem us in part; to do satisfaction for part of our sins? so that we must set a pair of old shoes, a lump of bread and cheese, or a filthy gray coat to make satisfaction, for the other part?† Say what you will, if you give not all, and fully, and alone to one Christ, then you deny Christ,

* Salvation. † Monastic rules and habits.

and the Holy Ghost, and St. John declares you to be contrary to Christ. This may also be proved by a plain scripture of the Holy Ghost, which is this; No man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, or to look on the book, till the Lamb came, unto whom the seniors spake on this manner, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast killed, and hast redeemed us by thy blood.

How say you to this, my lords? In heaven was there none found, neither by the angels, nor yet by the seniors, worthy to open the book, but Christ only? And will you find that which they could not find? will you set a helper to Christ, whom they set alone? but I pray you tell us what this shall be. All the world knoweth, that they are good works. But now, from whence come your good works?—From heaven? or out of the earth? or from under the earth? If they were in any of these places, where were they when the angels and the seniors sought them? Have you found them, whom they could not find? But let this pass: I pray you, what will you lay for your good works? or by what title will you bring them in, to join them with the Lamb in opening of the book? The seniors have laid for them, that the Lamb only was worthy to open the book, because he was slain, and redeemed them with his precious blood. Now, what cause lay you for your good works? The Lamb hath alone died for us, the Lamb only hath shed his blood for us: the Lamb only hath redeemed us; these things hath he done alone; now, if these be sufficient, then hath he alone made satisfaction, and is alone worthy to be our Redeemer and justifier.

Moreover, they that are in heaven confess, that this Lamb is alone worthy to redeem them. Are your works better than theirs, or can your works help them? If they can, then is not the Lamb only worthy to redeem them. Moreover the seniors fall down before the Lamb, giving him alone praise. And shall your good works stand up by the Lamb? then are they better than the seniors. But let us prove this by open scriptures. St. Paul took so great labour to prove this article, as he never took in any other; and all because he would make it plain, and stop the mouths of the gainsayers. But all this will not help them that have not the Spirit of God. Nevertheless, we

will by God's favour, do the best we can to confound the crooked enemies of Christ's blood, and though we cannot make them his friends, yet at the least we will so handle them, that they shall be ashamed openly so to speak against him, as they have done long time. And so will we handle them, by God's help, that all the world shall know that they glory in Christ's name, and by him are they also so high promoted in this world, that they cannot be higher. And yet deserve they of Christ, worst of all men.

But let us go to our purpose. St. Paul saith, All men are sinners and want the glory of God, but they are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. What is this, that all men have sinned, yea, and are justified freely? how shall a sinner do good works? how can he deserve to be justified? what call you freely? If there be any deservings less or more, then it is not freely. What call you, by his grace? If it be any part of works, then it is not of grace. For as St. Paul saith, Then grace were not grace. Here can be no evasion, the words are so plain. If you bring in any help of works, then for so much our redemption is not freely, nor yet is it of grace, as concerning the part that cometh of works, but partly of works, and then do you destroy all St. Paul and his whole disputation. For he contends against works, and clearly excludes works in justification, and brings in grace only. Now, that which is excluded in the whole by contention, cannot be brought in for a part to the cause. This is clear in his words, where he saith, Where is now thy rejoicing? It is excluded. By what law? by the law of works? Nay but by the law of faith. We do judge therefore, that a man is justified by faith, without the works of the law. Hear you not, that the gloriation of works is excluded; and yet will you boast your works? hear you not plainly St. Paul's sentence, which judges clearly with faith, and against all works? how can this be avoided?

Is it not clear? what can be answered to it? Is not this Paul's proposition, that he undertook to prove, Faith only justifieth? It were but lost labour for Paul to prove, that works did help to justification, for that the Jews did grant, and required no more but that works might not be clearly excluded. They were christened, and content to receive Christ for their Saviour, but not only, and alone.

In this were they content. Insomuch that they gloried against the gentiles who had no manner of works, and for that despised them, as people unworthy to be justified.

But peradventure here will be said, that Paul condemneth the works of the old law, but not the works of the new law. Are you now satisfied in your conscience? think you, that you have well solved St. Paul's argument? Think you, that this is sufficient to avoid St. Paul, who hath taken so great labour to prove this cause? Think you, that you shall be thus discharged before God? If you do, then go boldly into the straight judgment of God with this evasion, and doubt you not but there you shall find St. Paul, as stiffly and as strongly against you, and your new works, as ever he was against the Jews, and their old works. And if he did condemn the works of the law, that were instituted by the mouth of God, and the best works that ever were, think you that those works which you have invented, shall be there allowed?

Briefly, what works can you do, or excogitate, that are good, which are not in the old law, and of the old law? therefore he speaks of all manner of works, for the law includes all works that ever God instituted. The highest, and the best, and most perfect of all works are, the works of the ten commandments. And these are the works of the old law, and cannot justify, after your own sayings. Now, what works have you of the new law, other, or better than these? Our master, Christ, showed, that in fulfilling two of these commandments, all works are included. What works then are of the new law, that were not commanded in the old? Peradventure, you will say, all those works that Christ speaketh of in the fifth of Matthew are of the new law, and not of the old. For Christ saith, I say unto you, He that calleth his brother fool, or he that looketh on a woman to desire her, and such like, doth offend. These seem to be works of Christ, and not of Moses. Therefore, ye say there are works of the new law, not commanded in the old, and against them St. Paul disputes not.

To this I answer, that our Master, Christ, there reproves the false interpretation, which the scribes and pharisees did set to the law, but he teaches no new works, nor is a giver of any new law. For St. John saith, The law is given through Moses, but grace and verity came by Jesus Christ. He is the giver of grace and mercy, as all the prophets testify, and not another Moses. And therefore to purchase

us favour, he died on the cross, and so did not Moses: but he commands us to do this, and do that. But Christ saith, Depend thou on my doing, and believe thou what I have done for thee, for thee and not for me.

Now, to our purpose; Christ, I say, doth interpret, and declare the old law against the scribes and pharisees, who learned that the law was fulfilled and content with outward works, and that was their justification. This false doctrine our Master, Christ, reproves; and saith, that the law requires a pure and clean heart; and he will have his works fulfilled out of the heart, and not alone with hand, and feet, and tooth, and nail, as the pharisees say, and teach. So that our Master, Christ, teaches no new works, but alone expresses the virtue of the old law. And thus do holy doctors declare this fifth chapter of Matthew, and especially Augustine. Wherefore, out of that place cannot be proved, that there are certain works of the new law which never were commanded in the old.

Moreover, look in the old law, whether these things be forbidden, or commanded, and you shall find that the words of the law and Christ's exposition do agree. So that our Master teaches no new thing, nor yet any new works. But now grant, that there are certain works of the new law, which are not of the old. Yet have you not, and cannot prove that these shall justify. For there can be no more goodness in works, than were in works of the old law, for they were to God's honour, and to the profit of our neighbour. What goodness can works have more? and yet you grant that they cannot justify. How then shall your new works justify? Blessed St. Paul disputed against them that were christened, and had both works of the old law, and also of the new, and yet he concluded that Christ alone was their justifier. Mark his argument, If righteousness cometh of the law, then is Christ dead in vain: as he would say, If the law help to justify, for that was the opinion of the Jews, then is not Christ alone your justifier. If he be not your justifier alone, then is he dead in vain. How will St. Paul prove this consequence? On this manner—Either Christ doth this alone, or else he is dead in vain, for he will have no helper. This must needs be the meaning of his argument.

Now will I take this argument of St. Paul, and likewise dispute against your new works. If new works do help to justify, then is Christ dead in vain. But Christ is not

dead in vain. Therefore, new works do not help to justify. The first part is Paul's. The second you grant. Therefore, the third must needs follow. But let us see how St. Paul proves this proposition by an example; not of the old law, as though he disputed alone against the works of the old law, but by that holy and excellent patriarch Abraham, whom no manner of works could justify, but faith only. Think you that St. Paul speaks here of the works of the old law? Nay, doubtless. For how could Abraham do the works of law, and there was no law given till four hundred and thirty years after? Wherefore St. Paul constrains you to conclude, that no manner of good works, though they are as good as Abraham's works, can help to justification.

Note also St. Paul's argument. Abraham was justified so many years before the law was given. Therefore, saith he, The law doth not justify. So likewise, dispute I against your new works. Men were sufficiently, and perfectly justified alone by faith, before any new works were given, or preached. Therefore the works of the new law do not justify of necessity. The antecedent I prove thus; Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and John Baptist, and all the holy prophets were perfectly justified, before any new works, as you take new works, were spoken of. Therefore men were sufficiently justified, alone by faith. If St. Paul's argument conclude, so must mine also. Wherefore say what you can, here stands holy St. Paul stiffly and strongly for me, and against you, and saith, That we are freely, and alone justified by faith, without all manner of works. But let us see what Ambrose saith to this text. "They are justified freely, for they doing nothing, nor nothing deserving, alone by faith are justified by the gift of God," &c. Hear you not, that men working nothing at all, nor nothing deserving, are justified by faith only? yea, and freely? You were wont to cry for, "only, only, only;" here you have him, and to help him have also "gratis," that is to say, "freely;" and also "the gift of God," and "working nothing at all." If these words do not exclude works, and allow faith only, I cannot tell what words will do it; grant these words, and I will be content.

I will also bring you Origen on the same text, whose words are these: "Paul saith, that the justification of faith is only sufficient.—So that if a man do believe only, he is justified, though there be no works done of him at

all. By faith was the thief justified, without the works of the law. For our Lord did not ask him what he had done; nor did look for any works of him, but accepted him only for confessing of Christ." It follows; "Wherefore a man is justified by faith, unto whom as concerning justification, the works of the law help nothing," &c. What say you to Origen, who saith how men are justified, though they do no good works at all, for works do help nothing to justification, but faith only? Are not these plain words? grant these words, and we will ask no more of you. Here have you also, "alone, alone, alone." So that you need cry no more for "alone." Also Origen brings an open example of the thief, which no man can deny. Who can have less good works than a thief, who is neither good before God nor man? So that all the world may see, that this is no new opinion, seeing that the scripture, and also holy doctors do teach it. Also St. Paul, in the ninth chapter, brings in the gentile, who knows nothing of God, nor has done any good works, but on the contrary blasphemed God and his name, and always lived in idolatry, and an utter enemy unto all goodness.

He brings in also the Jew, full of good works of the law, who has also great zeal unto God, and to his works, yea, and of that Paul bears him witness. Briefly, he brings in for him such a Jew, that no man can complain of, but is full of good works. Yea, take all the best of the Jews together, for it were madness of Paul to speak of the damnable Jews, who were open wretches and condemned by the judgment of the law, with all their good works, and yet St. Paul excludes them, and repels them clearly from justification, with all their good zeal, and with all their good works, and concludes with plain words, that the gentile, who is full of damnable works, and had neither zeal, nor love unto goodness, is justified by faith only.

These are St. Paul's words; We say that the gentiles, which follow not righteousness, have obtained righteousness. I mean the righteousness which cometh of faith. But Israel, which followeth the law of righteousness, could not attain unto righteousness. Wherefore? because he sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. Are not these plain words? that the gentiles, which followed no righteousness nor had any mind thereto, are justified freely by faith? Is not here, "only faith?" Moreover, the Jew is reproved, with all his zeal, with all

his love, with all his study, and with all his good works. Is not this a marvellous thing? yes, verily, and so marvellous, that you shall never understand it, unless you believe. But peradventure, here shall be said, that the good works of the Jews did not profit them, because they had no faith: but if they had possessed faith, then would they have holpen to their justification.

To this I make answer, truth it is, good works did not profit the Jews, for lack of faith. But this is false, that works should have holpen to justification, if they had possessed faith. For St. Paul proves clearly, that good works help nothing to justification, and evil works hinder not the justification, that cometh by faith. And this he proved by the example of the gentile, who had no good works, but all evil works, and yet is justified by faith. Moreover, the Jew had the zeal of God, and all manner of good works with all things that the world can devise; yea, and also St. Paul speaks of the Jews that were christened, and all this could not help. Wherefore, no manner of works, whether they are in faith, or out of faith, can help to justify. NEVERTHELESS, works have their glory and reward. But the glory and praise of justification belongeth to Christ only. Also, St. Paul proves plainly in these words, that works have no place in justification; to him that worketh is the reward not given of favour, but of duty; to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the wicked man, is faith counted for righteousness.

How think you of these words? Are they not openly against all works? saith he not, that justification is imputed unto him that worketh not, but alone believeth in Him that justifieth the wicked man? (Rom. iv.) I pray you what good works doth the wicked man? Mark also how he saith, that righteousness is imputed unto him. Therefore, it is not deserved. For that which is deserved, is not imputed of favour, but it must be given of duty. How think you? is not this, "only faith?" You know that there are but works, and faith that do justify; and St. Paul excludeth works clearly. Therefore, faith alone remaineth. But peradventure, you will say, that works with faith do justify, nevertheless out of meekness, and lowliness, and avoiding of all boast of goodness, you will give all the glory to faith, as unto the principal thing, and without which, no works can help; yet that, notwithstanding, works are good, and help to justification, though of meekness you will not know

it. Is not this damnable hypocrisy? Yea, and that with God, which were intolerable, if it were with men. But how can you prove by scripture, that works are worthy of any glory of justification? Is not this open lying on faith; to give all to him, and yet, as you say, he is not worthy of all, for works are worthy of part. If faith be not worthy alone, confess it openly, and give works their praise, and faith her praise, and say not one thing with your mouth, and think another in your heart. For God searches the privacies of hearts. Who has required of you such a meekness? But I pray you, how can works help to justification, either less or more, when they are neither done, nor yet thought of? Who is justified, but a wicked man, who thinks nothing of good works? But these meek lies deserve no answer. Wherefore, let us hear what holy doctors say on this text: To him that worketh not, &c.

Ambrose saith on this manner, "It was so decreed of God, that after the law, the grace of God should require unto salvation, faith alone!" Which he proves by the example of the prophet, saying, "Blessed is that man to whom God doth impute justification without works. He saith, that they are blessed of whom God hath determined without labour, without all manner of observation, alone by faith, that they shall be justified before God. Blessed are they whose sins be forgiven. Clearly they are blessed, unto whom without labour, or without any work, their iniquities are remitted and their sins are covered, and no manner of works required of them, but only that they should believe," &c.

Are not these words plain? God hath decreed, that he shall require nothing to justification but faith; and he is blessed, to whom God imputes justification, without all manner of works, without all manner of observations. Also their sins are covered, and no manner of works of penance required of them, but only to believe. Here have you "faith alone," and "faith only," and here you cannot say, that Ambrose speaks alone of works of the law, but of all manner of works, of all manner of observations, yea and also of penance. Peradventure it will be said, as a great doctor* said once to me, that Ambrose understood it of young children, that were newly baptized; them their faith should save alone, without works. How think you?

* Dr. Wetherall.—*Fox.*

is not this a likely answer for a great doctor of divinity; for a great Duns man; for so great a preacher? Are not St. Paul and Ambrose well avoided, and clerkly?* But I made him this answer, that this epistle was written of St. Paul to the Romans, who were men, and not children, and also the words of scripture speak of the man, and not of the child. And Ambrose saith, "Blessed is that man."

But at this answer, he was not a little moved, and sware, let Ambrose and Augustine say what they will, he would never believe, but that works did help to justification! This was a lordly word of a prelate, and of a pillar of Christ's church! But what meddling is there with such mad men. But yet peradventure, you will say that I take a piece of the doctor, as much as makes for my purpose, notwithstanding he saith otherwise in another place, which I do not bring. What is that to me? yet is not my doctor thus avoided. For you cannot deny, but this is his saying, and upon this place of scripture, and this doth agree with scripture, or else he doth expound scripture evil. Wherefore, you must answer to the saying of the doctor in this place, for this is the place that is laid against you, and this the place whereby other places must be expounded. And if you dare deny him in this place, then will I deny him in all other places, by that same authority: then are the holy doctors clearly gone! Nevertheless, holy scripture stands openly against you, which if you deny, then have I a cause to suspect you. Wherefore take heed what you do. But yet peradventure will ye say, that I understand not Ambrose, nor holy doctors, as my lord of Rochester said, I understood not Tertullian; he had no other evasion to save his honour with. But it is not enough so to say, you must prove it, and other men must judge between you and me.

Here have I translated a great many of their sayings into English; let other men judge, whether I understand them or not. Go ye to the Latin and let us see what other sense you can take out. But, my lords, remember that our God is alive, whose cause we defend, before whom I dare well say, you are already confounded in your conscience; wherefore doubt you not, but that terrible vengeance hangeth over you, if you repent not, which when it cometh, cometh sharply. How are ye able to defend a thing, that you cannot prove openly by holy

* Cleverly put aside, and in an able manner.

scripture? Say what you will, your conscience will murmur and grudge, and will never be satisfied with men's dreams, nor yet with tyranny. Think you that your laws and your inventions can be a sufficient rule for christian men to live by? and to save their conscience thereby? Think you that your cause is sufficiently proved, when you have compelled poor men by violence to grant it? then may we destroy all scripture, and receive alone your tyranny.

But, my lords, this matter is not righted by your judgment, but by our master Christ, and his blessed word, before whose straight judgment you shall be judged, and that straightly. For when all your grace, all your honour, all your dignity, all your pomp and pride; briefly, all that your hearts do now rejoice in, shall lie in the dust, then shall you be called to a straight reckoning: it is no light game, nor child's play. Mark it well, for it lieth on your neck. But what needeth me to lose many words, for if you are half so full of grace as you say you are of good works, then will you reckon it better than I can move you. But again to our purpose. St. Paul proves the justification of faith only, in these words; No man is justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, and we do believe in Jesus Christ, that we may be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law.

Mark, how he saith, that no man is justified by the works of the law, no not St. Peter: how think you? does not St. Paul exclude works, and brings in faith alone? yea, and that the works of the law, which were the best works in the world; and he believed to be justified only by the faith of Jesus Christ and not by works, and that he proves in these words of the prophet; A righteous man liveth by faith. Hear you not, how a righteous man lives by faith? What call you living by faith? If he live any part by works, then he lives not by faith, but partly by works. Then is St. Paul's probation imperfect. But let us see how your doctors* do expound this text.

Now he plainly shows that faith alone hath the virtue to justify, and he brings Habakkuk, saying, Of faith (and not of the law) shall a righteous man live. He adds well, "afore God," for before man, peradventure, they shall be reckoned righteous, that stick to the law, but not before God, &c. Here have you "only." And also that this holy justification is before God, and according to his

* Athanasius.—*Fox.*

judgment, and not according to men's judgments. Wherefore, glory as much as you can of your good works. They cannot alone justify you, but also they are of no value, but damnable and very sin, if there be no faith. So far are they from helping to justification. This Augustine witnesses in these words, " Those same works that are done before faith, though they seem unto men laudable, yet are they but vain, and I do judge them as great strength, and as swift running, out of the way. Wherefore let no man count his good works before faith : where faith is not, there is no good work, the intention maketh a good work, but faith doth guide the intention, &c. Here Augustine condemneth all your good works before faith, and saith that they are nothing worth, but vain, and things out of the way. How can such things help to justification?

Mark also, how that your good intention, whereupon you boast that you do so many good works by, cannot help you, for it is blind, and knows not what to do, though it stand well in its own conceit, without faith, which is its guide. So that all things before faith, are but very blindness. But as soon as faith cometh, he doth both justify, and also maketh the works good, which before were sin. But let us see what Bernard saith of good works. " I do abhor whatsoever thing is of me. Except, peradventure that that be mine, which God hath made me. By grace hath he justified me freely, and by that hath he delivered me from the bondage of sin. Thou hast not chosen me, saith Christ, but I have chosen thee, nor found I any merits in thee, that might move me to choose thee, but I prevented* all thy merits. Wherefore thus by faith have I married thee unto me, and not by the works of the law ; I have married thee also in justice,† but not in the justice of the law, but in the justice which is of faith. Now this remains, that thou dost judge a right judgment between thee and me ; give thou judgment, wherein that I have married thee, where it is open, that thy merits did not come between, but my pleasure and will," &c. Bernard doth despise all his good works, and betakes himself only to grace, but you stick partly to your good works, and not only to grace. Had Bernard no good works to stick to? mark that. Bernard is God's child, freely by grace, which cannot be, if works do help less or more. Was he not a christened man? had he no works of the new law, as you call them? I think, yes. And yet he saith, that

* Went before. † Righteousness.

there was no merit, nor any goodness, but that we were freely chosen. Wherefore he provoketh you, and all such as you be, to judge righteously between God and you, the which hath prevented all your goodness, and that of his own will, and of his own pleasure. How can he find any goodness that preventeth all goodness? so that here have you clearly, that good works of the law, or moral good works (as you feign) do nothing help to justification before God, for they are prevented of justification.

This is also well proved by Augustine, saying, "Wherefore, these things considered, and declared according to the strength that it hath pleased God to give us, we do gather, that a man cannot be justified by the precepts of good living, that is, not by the law of works, but by the law of faith; not by the letter, but by the Spirit; not by the merits of works, but by free grace," &c. Hear you this? Not by merits of works, but by free grace? what call you, "free grace," but, without all things, saving grace? what call you "not of works," but that works help nothing? For if works did help, then would he not say "not of works," but "not of works only," but "part of works, and part of faith;" but he excludes works, fully and only. Again, the same that purchases us remission of our sins, also purchases justification. For justification is nothing but remission of sins. Now faith purchases us remission, therefore by faith we are justified.

Now, that faith doth purchase remission of sins, it is well proved by this article of our faith, "I believe remission of sins." Now, if I have not this remission for faith, then faith deceives me, for I do believe only because I would have remission of sins. What needeth me to believe remission of sins, if I may deserve it by works? also our Master, Christ, declares openly, that no manner of works, whatsoever they be, can justify before God. These are his words, "When you have done all things that are commanded you, yet say, that we are unprofitable servants;"—if you be unprofitable, then are you not justified. And if you cannot be justified when you have done all things, how will you be justified, when you do in a manner nothing? and especially of those things that are commanded you; wherefore this is plain, that our works cannot help us to justification. For when we have done all things, yet we are unprofitable. But let us prove this by an open example. I put this case, my lords, (unto you I speak,) that our noble prince would call you all before him, and

say, "My lords, so it is, that it has pleased us to call you unto the spiritual dignity of bishops, and to make you of our council, and lords of our realm, and also of our parliament. Now, would we know of you, which of you all has deserved it, or reckons himself worthy, by his deserving, less or more, of this dignity?" What will you say to this? What will you answer to the king's grace? Is there one among you all, that dare be so bold as to say to the king's grace, that he has not given it unto him freely, but that he has done the king such faithful service, that he was bound to give it unto him? yea, and that of his deserving? If there were one that were so proud as to say this, think you that the king's grace would not lay to his charge, how that he had not done half his duty, but were rather bound to do ten times as much more, and yet the king's grace were not bound to give him a bishopric, for he had done but his duty, and not all that.

Now, if your good works, and all your faithful service, be not able to deserve a bishopric of the king's grace, how will you be able, by your works, to deserve heaven, and justification before the King of all kings? When you have answered to this, before the king's grace, then come and dispute with God, of the justification of your works, and yet they shall be far unlike. Wherefore, I conclude of these scriptures, and of these doctors, that the faith, which we have in Christ Jesus, and his blessed blood, doth only, and sufficiently justify us before God, without the help of any works.

And though that all scripture be nothing else, but a whole probation of this article, (that is, alone a perfect commendation, and a praise of Christ, and his blessed merits, that he hath deserved for us,) yet will I pass over to bring in any more places. For they that are not content with these scriptures, will not be satisfied, nor yet content to give alone all glory to God, though I brought in all the new testament. Yea Christ himself could not satisfy them, if he were here, no nor yet though heaven, and earth, and all creatures therein, were nothing else, but probations of this article, it would not help. Wherefore, I let such infidels pass, and leave them to the judgment of God, alone certifying them of this one thing, which is infallible, how the day shall come, that it shall repent them, yea, and that sorer than I can either write, or think, that they did not believe the least jot of this holy article. But unto our purpose. The very true way of justification is

this. First cometh God, for the love of Christ Jesus, alone of his mere mercy, and giveth us freely the gift of faith, whereby we do believe God, and his holy word, and stick fast unto the promises of God, and believe, that though heaven, and earth, and all that is in them should perish, and come to nought, yet God shall be found true in his promises—for this faith sake, are we the elect children of God.

This is not such a faith, as men dream, when they merely believe that there is one God, and believe that he is eternal; believing that he made the world of nought, yea, and believe that the gospel is true, and all things that God speaketh must be true, and fulfilled, with other such things. This, I say, is not the faith that we are justified by, for devils and infidels have this faith, and also we may attain to these things by strength of reason; but the faith that shall justify us, must be of another manner of strength, for it must come from heaven, and not from the strength of reason. It must also make me believe, that God, the Maker of heaven and earth, is not alone a Father, but also my Father: yea, and that through the favour, which Christ hath purchased me, from the which favour, neither heaven nor earth, tribulation nor persecution, death nor hell, can divide me. But to this stick I fast, that he is not alone my Father, but also a merciful Father, yea, and that unto me merciful, and so merciful, that he will not impute my sins unto me, though they are ever so great, so long as I depend on the blessed blood of Christ Jesus, and sin not of malice, but of frailty, and of no pleasure.

He also is a liberal Father, yea, and that unto me liberal, who will not alone promise me all things, but also give them me, whether they be necessary to the body or to the soul. He also is not only liberal, but mighty to perform all things that he promiseth unto me. Briefly, this faith makes me to hang clearly upon God, and of his blessed promises made in Christ, and in his sweet and precious blood, and not to fear death, nor any affliction, nor persecution, nor tribulation; but to despise all these things; and not alone these, but to despise also mine own life for Christ's sake.

Finally, of a fleshly brute, it makes me a spiritual man; of a damnable child, it makes me a heavenly son; of a servant of the devil, it makes me a free-man of God; delivered from the law, from sin, from death, from the devil, and from all misery that might hurt me. My lords, this

is the faith that doth justify, and that we do preach. And because it is given from heaven into our hearts by the Spirit of God, therefore it can be no idle thing; but it must needs do all manner of things, that are to the honour of God, and also to the profit of our neighbour; insomuch, that at all times necessary, it must needs work well, and also bring forth all good works, that may be to the profit and helping of any man. But these works are not done to justify the man, but a just man must needs do them. Not unto his profit, but only to other men's profits, even as our Master, Christ, suffered hunger, and thirst, and persecution, and took great labours in preaching of his word, yea, and also suffered death. All these things, I say, did he not to further or to profit himself, but for our merits, and for our profit. So likewise doth a just man his works. And as a good tree in time of the year brings forth good apples, not to make it good, for it is good before, nor yet is this apple to its profit, but unto others, notwithstanding, the good nature that is in it, must needs bring it forth—so likewise, the just man must needs do good works, not by them to be justified, but only in them to serve his brother: for he hath no need of them, concerning his justification.

Wherefore, now here have you the very true cause of justification; that is, faith alone: and also the very true way and manner of doing good works: and how that no man can do good works, but a justified man, as our Master, Christ, saith; Either make the tree good, and then his fruit good, or else the tree evil, and his fruit evil; for a good tree must needs bring forth good fruit, and a bad tree, evil fruit. But now let me answer to the scriptures, and to the reasons that they bring to prove that works do justify. First, comes the fleshly and damnable reason, and she saith; If we be justified alone by faith, what need we to do any good works? what need we to crucify, or mortify our flesh? for all these will not profit us, and we shall be saved, though we do none of them all. Thus did blind reason dispute with St. Paul, when he had proved that God, of his mercy, had delivered us freely from the damnable bondage of the law.

Anon he judged that he might do what he would, for he was no longer under the law. To this St. Paul answers, that if we obey unto the works of sin, then are we the servants of sin; and if we obey to the works of justice, then are we the servants of justice. So, that if we truly have that same faith, that justifieth us, we shall desire to

do none other works but those that belong to justification; not that the works do justify, but that we must needs do these works, as the very true fruits of justification, and not as the cause of justification. And therefore those men that will do no good works because they are justified only by faith, are not the children of God, nor the children of justification. For the living Spirit of God is no author of evil nor of sin, but he crieth in our hearts, "Abba, Father." And of that, is this a sure, and an evident token, for if they were the very true children of God, they would be the more glad to do good works, because that they are justified freely. Therefore, should they also be moved freely to works, if it were for no other purpose, nor profit, but only to do the will of their merciful God, who hath so freely justified them; and also to profit their neighbour, whom they are bound to serve of very true charity.

Take an example; here is a thief, who is condemned by right and the law to be hanged, whom the king's grace of his mercy, freely delivers from the gallows, and gives him his pardon. Now this thief, thus delivered, will not keep himself a true man, nor do those works that belong to a true man to do, but he falls again to stealing, because the king pardoned him so freely, and reckons that the king is so merciful, that he will hang no thieves, but will deliver them all of his mercy, without their deserving. Now, how think you, will the king be merciful unto this thief, when he comes again to the gallows? Nay truly, for he was not delivered for that cause, but to keep himself a true man.

Then comes my lord of Rochester, and he saith, that faith doth begin a justification in us, but works do perform it, and make it perfect. I will recite his own words: "Justification is said to be begun only by faith, but not to be consummated, for consummate justification can no otherwise be attained than by works, wrought and brought forth to light; works do consummate justification. Faith first begins," &c. What christian man would think, that a bishop would thus trifle, and play with God's holy word? God's word is so plain, that no man can avoid it, how that faith justifieth alone; and now comes my lord Rochester, with a little, and a vain distinction, invented of his own brain, without authority of scripture, and will clearly avoid all scriptures, and all the whole disputation of St. Paul. But, my lord, say to me of your conscience, how do you reckon to avoid the vengeance of God, since you thus trifle, and despise God's holy word? Think you,

that this vain distinction will be allowed before Jesus Christ? for whose glory we do contend and strive; before whom we do handle this matter?

I do think verily, that your own conscience doth sorely accuse you, for thus blaspheming the holy word of God. Wherefore, my lord, for Christ's sake remember that you are aged, and shall not long tarry here, and these vain distinctions that you have invented to the pleasure of men, and to the great perverting of God's holy word, shall be to your everlasting damnation. And, at the least, if you fear not the terrible vengeance of God, remember the shame of the world, and think not that all men are so mad, and so unlearned, as to be deceived by this trifling distinction; seeing that the word of God is so plain against it. Doth not St. Paul say, that our justification is alone of faith, and not of works? How can you avoid this same. Not of works. (Eph. ii.) If works do make justification perfect, then St. Paul's words are not true; also St. Paul saith, that we are the children of God, by faith. And if we be the children, we are also the heirs.

Now, what imperfection find you in children, and in heirs? Christian men desire no more than this, and all this have they by faith only. And will you say, that faith doth but begin a justification? Besides that, you know well, that St. Paul doth prove in all the whole epistle to the Romans, and also to the Galatians, that faith doth justify, yea, and that by contention against works. Now, how can you bring in works to make justification perfect, and St. Paul hath excluded them?

Moreover, why did not the Jews, against whose works St. Paul disputed, bring in this distinction for them? Briefly, what will you say to all the doctors that I have here recited, who say, that "only faith" doth justify? But doubtless, if it were not to satisfy other men, this distinction were not worthy an answer. Another damnable reason is made, that is an open and plain lie, which is this. Thou sayest, "that works do not justify, nor yet help to justification, but faith only. Therefore, thou destroyest all good works, and wilt that no man shall work well, but alone believe."

I answer, if there were any shame in men, they might well be ashamed of these open lies.

Tell me one that is learned, that ever did say, or teach, that men should do no good works. Many there be, that say, Works do not justify, as St. Paul, and all his scholars;

but no man denies good works. But I marvel not at them, for they do but the works of their father, who was a liar, and a murderer from the beginning. I pray you, what consequent is this, after your own logic? "works do not justify," therefore, we need not to do them, but despise them, for they are of no value. Take a like consequent. You say, that the king's grace doth not justify,—therefore, you despise him?—therefore, he is no longer king? Also the sun and moon do not justify,—therefore, you destroy them? But such a lie must St. Paul needs suffer, when he had proved, that faith only did justify. Then came your overthwart fathers,* and said, "Therefore thou destroyest the law, for thou teachest that it justifieth not." God forbid, saith St. Paul, for we do learn the very way to fulfil the law, that is, Faith; whereby the law alone is fulfilled, and without the which, all the works of the law are but sin. So do we likewise teach the very true way, whereby all good works must be done. As first, a man is by faith to be justified; and then, a just man must needs do good works, which before were but sin, and now all are good, yea, his eating, drinking, and sleeping, are good.

But, beside all these, have they certain scriptures. First, of St. James, whose words are these, Wilt thou understand, O thou vain man, that faith without deeds is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified of his deeds, when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? likewise, was not Rahab the harlot justified, when she received the messengers, and sent them out another way? Augustine declares in divers places, that blessed St. Paul, and St. James, seemed to be contrary in this matter, and declares how that St. Paul speaks of works that go before faith, and St. James speaks of works that follow faith; and yet Augustine will not be compelled by the words of this epistle, to grant, that any works do justify, by the reason, that St. Paul's words are so openly and vehemently to the contrary. Wherefore, seeing that there appears a controversy here in two places of the scripture, it stands with all reason and learning, that the same place, which seems to be feeblest, and also the darkest, should be expounded, and declared by that part of scripture, which is clearest and most of authority.

Now therefore, inasmuch that both blessed St. Paul, and also St. James's meaning is, that good works should be done, and they that are christian men should not be

* The fathers of the church, who contradict you.

idle, and do no good, because they are the children of grace, but that they should rather in their living, express outwardly their goodness, received of grace; and as blessed St. Paul saith, to give their members to be servants unto righteousness, as they were before servants unto uncleanness. For this cause, I say, St. James's saying must needs be understood for to be written against those men, that boasted themselves of an idle and vain opinion, that they thought themselves to have, which they reckoned to be a good faith. Now St. James, to prove that this faith was but an idle thing, and of none effect, declares it clearly, by that it brought forth in time and place convenient no good works. And therefore he calls it "a dead faith."

He brings in also a naked brother, who hath need of clothing, unto these men, that boast of their faith, who had no compassion of his necessity. Wherefore he concludes, that they have no true faith. And therefore he saith unto them, Show unto me thy faith without works, and I shall show unto thee of works, my faith.

Here is it plain, that St. James would no more but that the faith is a dead faith, and of no value, which hath no works. For works should declare and show the outward faith, and works should be an outward declaration, and a testimony of the inward justification, received of faith; not that works can or may take away our sin, or else be any satisfaction for any part of sin, for that belongs to Christ alone. As blessed St. John saith, and also St. Paul, He hath appeared once for all, to put sin to flight by the offering up of himself. And that this is St. James's meaning, it is declared by that which follows. Thou seest, saith he, that faith wrought in Abraham's deeds, and through the deeds was his faith made perfect.

Mark, how faith wrought in his deeds; that is, his faith, because it was a living faith, brought forth, and wrought out that high work of oblation. Also, his faith was perfect through his deeds. That is, his faith was declared, and had a great testimony before all the world, that it was a living, and a perfect, and a right shapen faith, which Abraham had. So that his inward faith declared him before God, and his outward works before the world, to be good, and justified. And thus was his faith made perfect before God and man. Now unto this do we all agree, that faith alone justifieth before God, which in time and place doth work well, yea, it is a living thing of God, which cannot be dead, nor idle in man. But yet for all

that, we do give to faith and to Christ's blood, that glory, which belongs to them alone, that is to say, justification, remission of sins, satisfying of God's wrath, taking away of everlasting vengeance, purchasing of mercy, fulfilling of the law, with all other like things. The glory of these, I say, belongs to Christ only, and we are partakers of them by faith in Christ's blood only. For it is no work that receives the promise made in Christ's blood, but faith only.

Take an example. God saith to Abraham, In thy seed shall I bless all people. Now, Abraham's works can do nothing to receiving of this blessing; nor yet can they make him depend on that seed, but he believes God, and cleaves fast by faith to that promise, and thinks, that God shall be true, though he be a liar, and so is he partaker of the blessing made in the seed. Note also, that this blessing is promised in Abraham's seed, and not to Abraham's works. Therefore, Abraham is blessed, because he depends upon the seed, and not on his works. Also, blessed St. Paul doth drive a sore argument against works, inasmuch as scripture declares, He saith, not unto seeds, as of many; but as of one. Gal. iii. 16.

Now, if works do help less or more to justification, then the promise must needs be made and pertain to many, and not to one only, which were sorely against blessed St. Paul. Wherefore, I conclude, that the glory and praise of justification belongs only to faith in Christ's blood, and not to works in any wise. Notwithstanding, we do also laud and praise good works, and do teach men diligently to do good works, inasmuch as God their Maker hath commanded them: yea, and also to profit their neighbours by their good works: and that other men, who blaspheme the verity, might be moved, through their virtuous living and conversation, to the holy religion of Christ.

For these causes, and others more, I say, do I teach good men to live well and virtuously; yea, and also we teach that good works shall have a reward of God, as scripture testifies; but not remission of sins, nor yet justification, for their reward. Wherefore, this saying of St. James must needs be verified against them that boast themselves of vain faith; which was indeed but an idle opinion, and no true faith; for it did not work through charity. And therefore St. James disputes well against them, that this faith was but a dead faith, and could not help them more than it helped the devil. So that this of St. James makes nothing against me, but rather with me.

Also, you have another scripture for you, which is this; Before God they are not justified, which hear the law, but they which do the law shall be justified. Of this text you glory and cry, "Works, works." But if you would consider the mind of St Paul, you should well perceive that he means not, how works might deserve justification, for then could he not have concluded this against the Jews; for they did the works of the law to the uttermost, and yet were they not justified. Wherefore, St. Paul means by the hearers of the law, all them that do the outward works of the law, for fear, or for reward, or of hypocrisy, or else by them to be justified. The doers calls he them, that do the works of the law, after the intent of the law, and as the law commands them, that is, in the true faith of Christ Jesus, which is the very end of the law, and the fulfilling of the law, as St. Paul saith, to all them that believe. Wherefore all men are but hearers only of the law, till the time that they have the faith of Christ Jesus, which is imputed unto them for justice. And the works of the law are no cause of justification, but alone an outward testimony and witness that the law is fulfilled inwardly in their conscience before God, and so fulfilled, that it has no accusation against them, for Christ hath made satisfaction for them, of the which they are partakers by their faith. And so the law must be content to admit all these men to be fulfillers and doers of the law.

And now, that you shall not say that this is my dream, here are Augustine's words: "The doers of the law shall be justified. So must it be understood, that we may know that they can none otherwise be the doers of the law, except they are first justified; not that justification belongeth unto doers, but that justification doth precede all manner of doings," &c. Hear you not that justification is first given, that men might be able to do the works of the law? This is also the exposition of your gloss.* I have marvelled you study it no better.

Also, you have another scripture, and that is this, Cornelius, a gentile, did great alms, and prayed unto God always: unto whom the angel spake on this manner, 'Thy prayer and thy alms are come up into remembrance in the presence of God. Of this text you gather, that his good works did help to justify him. I answer; the Holy Ghost hath openly declared himself there. For he saith, that this Cornelius was a devout man, and one that feared God.

* The commentaries of the church.

How could this be, without that God had taught him inwardly by faith? Yea, how could he know God, and that devoutly, but by faith? Therefore he was justified before God by his faith, but the world knew not his justification. And therefore, the Holy Ghost doth declare his inward justification, when he saith that he was devout, and feared God: and also doth show openly the fruits of his justification, when he saith, that he did alms. Moreover, you have there, that the Holy Ghost fell on them, before they were baptized in water, which declares openly, that they were justified before God.

This is well declared also in your own law, whose words are these; "Cornelius, the centurion, being yet a heathen man, was made clean by the gift of the Holy Ghost." Here have you plainly, that he was justified by the gift of the Holy Ghost, before all good works. For he was a heathen man. Another scripture ye have, which is this; If I have all faith, so that I may transpose mountains, and have no charity, I am nothing. Of this you gather, that faith without charity cannot justify: I answer; this can you not gather of St. Paul, for it is clear that he speaks not of this thing, whereby man may be justified, but only he teaches how they that be justified must work with charity. It is also plain that he speaks not of faith, that doth justify inwardly, but of that faith which doth work outwardly. The which is called a gift of the Holy Ghost; as the gift of tongues, the gift of prophecies, the gift of healing, the gift of interpretation, as it is opened in the chapter before. Now, is this faith not given to justify, but only to do miracles, wonders, and signs by. Therefore, saith St. Paul, If I had all faith, so that I could move mountains.

Also it is plain, that certain men shall say unto Christ; Behold, we have done miracles, and cast out devils in thy name: and yet he shall say unto them, Truly, I know you not. So that this faith is a gift of God, that justifieth not, any more than the gift of science, or prophecies. And sometimes is it in the church, and sometimes not, and it is never of necessity there to be. But, the faith that we speak of, which doth believe the promises of God, and cleaveth fast to the blood of Christ, hath no other virtue, but to justify, and must needs justify, wheresoever it is, and it cleaves so fast to God's word, that it looks for no miracles. This faith is never out of the church, for it is the life of the church, and it is that faith which our Master, Christ, prayed for, that it might never fail. And therefore

St. Paul, when he describes this faith, he calls it a faith that worketh by charity, not that it justifieth by charity. For as he saith there plainly, It is neither circumcision, nor yet uncircumcision, that is of any value in Christ Jesus, but faith. Here he plainly excludes from justification, the highest work of the law,—circumcision, and setteth faith alone—not the gift of faith, that doeth miracles, but the gift of faith that worketh by charity. And that ye shall not think this to be a dream, here bring I to you, Athanasius, whose words are these: "There are two manner of faiths: one is justifying, as that of the which is spoken, Thy faith hath saved thee. Another is called the gift of God, whereby miracles are done. Of the which it is written; "If you have faith, as a grain of mustard seed," &c. So that here have you plain, that faith doth justify only and perfectly, before all manner of works; that is, faith is given of God freely into our souls, unto the which faith, justification is all only promised, and is all only imputed, and reckoned of God. Nevertheless, this faith, in time and place convenient, is of that strength, that he must needs work by charity, not for to be justified thereby, for if he were not before justified, it were not possible that he could have charity. For according to your own schoolmen, an unbeliever cannot have charity; but the justified man, he is a free servant unto God, for the love that he hath unto him. The which love seeks not in God its own profit, nor its own advantage, for then were it wicked, but seeks alone the will of God, and the profit of other men, and works neither for love of heaven, nor yet for fear of hell. For he knoweth well, that heaven, with all the joys thereof, is prepared from the beginning of the world, not by him, but by his Father. And it must needs follow, as contrariwise, that the infidel, and the wicked man, do not work their wicked deeds, because they would have hell or everlasting damnation to their reward, but they would rather the contrary. Notwithstanding, hell and everlasting damnation must needs follow their wicked deeds. Finally, a righteous man is a free servant of God, and worketh not as a hireling. For if it were possible that there were no heaven, yet would he do no less good; for his respect is to the Maker of the world, and the Lord of all rewards.

There is also another argument, and that is this; Faith is a work: but works do not justify; therefore, faith doth not justify. Answer: Truth it is, that we do not mean,

that faith, for its own dignity, and for its own perfection, doth justify us. But the scripture saith, that faith alone justifieth, because it is that thing alone whereby I do depend upon Christ. And by my faith alone am I partaker of the merits and mercy purchased by Christ's blood; and faith it is alone that receives the promises made in Christ. Wherefore, we say with blessed St. Paul, that faith only justifieth by imputation; that is, all the merits and goodness, grace and favour, and all that is in Christ to our salvation, is imputed and reckoned unto us, because we hang and believe on him, and he can deceive no man that believeth in him. And our justice* is not, as the schoolmen teach, a formal justice, which is by fulfilling of the law deserved of us: for then our justification were not of grace and of mercy, but of deserving and of duty. But it is a justice, that is reckoned and imputed unto us, for the faith in Christ Jesus, and it is not of our deserving, but clearly and fully of mercy imputed unto us.

Now, most honourable and gracious prince, I have declared unto your highness, what faith it is, that doth justify us before God, and also brought for my sentence, not only the blessed word of God, the which were sufficient in this cause, but the exposition of holy doctors, that your grace might see, that I am not moved to this opinion, of a light cause, nor that this doctrine of mine is so new, as men have noted it. Moreover, I have declared unto your grace, how that I would have good works done, and would not have a christian man's life to be idle, or else a life of uncleanness: but I would have them to be changed into all virtue and goodness, and to live in good works, after the commandment and will of God. So, that your grace may well perceive, that mine adversaries have not reported truly of me, when they have said, how that I would that men should neither fast, nor pray, nor give alms, nor yet be penitent for their sins. I have never said it, nor yet taught any like sentence. I take God to record, my works and my deeds, and all my writings, that ever I wrote, or made. Wherefore, I doubt not, if it please your grace graciously to hear me, but that I will prove them untrue in this cause. and many other more. This doth almighty God know to be true. Who ever preserve your most royal majesty, in honour, and goodness. Amen.

* Righteousness.

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